



PLAYER'S

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The London Charivari

THE congregation of a church that is being threatened with closure is fighting for its survival by the illogical method of boycotting it and attending other churches instead, and a bishop has registered his disapproval of a vicar by refusing to visit his parish even for confirmations. This spread of Anglican boycotting is, perhaps, evidence of that nearer contact with the industrial world that, from time to time, the Church claims it yearns for. Will it end in congregations' refusing to pass the plate until the curate is put on a higher salary scale or refusing to say the Responses on the ground that the rector has been sent to Coventry? If an archbishop disapproves of one of his diocesans will he refuse to enter the diocese? Or has the Church simply become more publicity-conscious lately?

Nothing Sacred

SEVERAL readers of the *Mail* headline, "Penniless Princess will wed Baudouin's Brother," were fleetingly alarmed : were



we going to have even racehorses' romances in the papers now?

Air Hazard

WHILE politicians and others chatter about the effect of Section 63 of the Representation of the People Act on television electioneering, one bold citizen goes further. Sir Alan Herbert tells me that he lately had a

letter beginning "As a matter of courtesy, I am writing to inform you that I have resolved to institute criminal proceedings against you under Section 63 of the Representation of the People Act, 1949, in connection with your broadcast about your candidature at East Harrow." The odd thing, as he points out, is that although the papers interviewed him without restriction during that brief *rapprochement* with politics, no crime was thereby committed; but once you get on the air you are in for it. Perhaps the conclusion is that nothing the press can say ever has the slightest effect on the electors.

Where's My Dinner?

SIR RONALD FISHER's prediction that dogs and cats will eventually be taught to talk has been widely welcomed by

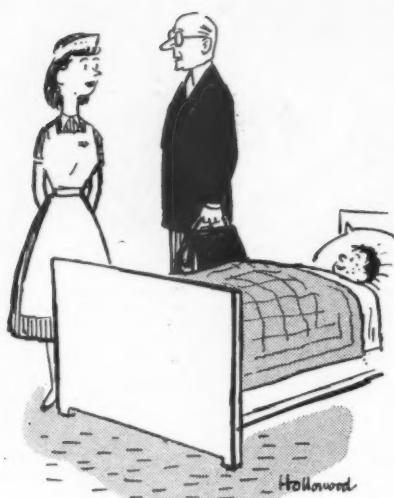
"...three whittings, please, & a dressed crab".



non-animal-lovers. They say it will serve people right when their pets start boasting that their masters understand every word they say.

Through a Straw Darkly

MR. HEATHCOAT AMORY's comment on the relative attractions of Socialist and Conservative policies—"We shall before long have a chance to see which approach commends itself most to the people"—was described on one front page as an election hint. I hope that politicians



"If Dr. Adenauer wasn't so ridiculously touchy I'd say it was German measles."

will take more care with their public utterances during these anxious weeks. One's blood-pressure is being pumped up and drained down continually. No sooner has one statesman made a glancing reference to a thinking electorate, and excited us with visions of an imminent polling-day, than another talks of a slow and painful road to the Summit, which is as good as naming a date in the autumn. What did Mr. Allan, Foreign Office Under-Secretary, mean when he said "All consular fees have recently been reviewed"? Was there an election hint in Mr. Macmillan's denial that Carbon 14 was present in fall-out? This is a time of strain for us all. Let the men in public life be cautious, otherwise, in the end, we may go and vote on the wrong day.

Supermach

THOSE whose memories go back to the Schneider Trophy will recall how staggering in those days seemed each successive advance in air speed. When the trophy was finally won for Britain in 1931 by the Supermarine S6 B at an average speed of 340 m.p.h. and when, a few days later, the same plane achieved a record of 408 m.p.h., the mind could scarcely grasp such velocities. Modern aircraft speeds are now too high to thrill. Between Mach 2, the speed at which the Supersonic

Transport Aircraft Committee recommend that B.O.A.C.'s future planes should lumber across the Atlantic, and Mach 3 (at which the U.S.A. designers are said to be aiming) there is no emotional difference; one simply notes with interest that at the latter figure the fuselage is more inclined to melt. Much more remarkable than these tedious performance details is the news that supersonic airliners are likely to have the tail mounted forward of the wings. This will be a comfort to nervous passengers who have heard that it is safer to sit facing the tail when landing at Mach 1 or thereabouts.

Long Long Trail

WHEN the gallimaufry from England lately, now, or soon invading Russia sets out on the return trail a bizarre pastiche of The Retreat from Moscow suggests itself, for I can't see them all getting all they want. No snow, the season is wrong, but somewhere in that tattered cavalcade will ride Jimmy Edwards, moustache adroop like a racing bicyclist's handle-bars, his incessant cries of "Whacko!" having been misheard as Cracow and interpreted as tactless references to Polish independence; Monty by no means clear whether he or the enemy has been given a bloody nose; Mr. Gaitskell wondering about the future



"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday, dear William,
Happy birthday to you."

collective labour offers you; and Dr. Hewlett Johnson, more cheerful than the rest at having seen no flies on Khrushchev. Naughton and Gold were too busy polishing up the recently fashioned *Clown Jewels* to make the trip.

Silver Lining

I LIKED Lord Kilmuir's nice sense of distinction in his Cardiff speech, when he pointed out that Welsh unemployment in the old days was "the unemployment of recession," whereas it is caused to-day "by adjustment, by progress, and a change over from one form of organization to another." Gossip in the labour exchange queues has taken on a generally more cheerful note.

Simply Not Dunne

I HAVE been sent a copy of a book called *The Conquest of Time*, in which Mr. Harold Horwood tells how to dream the winners of horse races. It seems to me that Mr. Horwood is offering us the most convincing proof of the existence of "Psi," or paranormal perception, or whatever you like to call it, since the famous "cross-correspondences" dictated by Gurney, Sidgwick and Myers after their death, for his dreams *work*. He backed Sayani for the Cambridgeshire at forty to one in 1946 and made £200. He backed Las Vegas for the Manchester November Handicap a month later and won £775. But suppose he succeeds in teaching us all how to do it? Doesn't he realize that when we all know the results of all the races in advance we shall never get a decent price again? and that the entire economic structure of the nation will collapse through uncontrolled dealing on the Stock Exchange? For once I am against public-spiritedness; Mr. Horwood would do much better to keep his secret to himself, or perhaps just impart it to one or two favoured confidantes, of whom I am willing to become one.

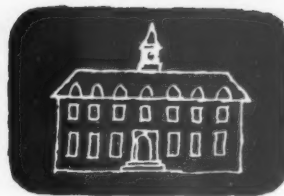
— MR. PUNCH

Budget Price Changes

Some of the advertisements in this issue of *Punch* and the issue of April 15 were printed before the Budget, which may have affected the prices quoted. You should make sure from your retailer or from the advertiser direct what is the present correct price.



CRADLE TO UNIVERSITY

9 Public, Modern, Grammar,
or Preposterous

By R. G. G. PRICE

IF you are very rich you can hire tutors or even school-mates for your teenager or you can send him to one of those curious schools which have more staff than pupils and teach things like Lugeing and Charm and Stage Lighting. If you are at least richer than most you can try him on a Public School, though he (I will *not* say "he or she" the whole time) will probably need to be launched via a good Prep School. Otherwise you can buy a cheap and nasty imitation of the real thing or take advantage of the State Educational System like almost everybody else, when your child's fate will depend on which county you live in—provision varies wildly—how he feels on The Day, how good his present school is at rocket-firing its alumni into branches of education that lead to salaries rather than wages and whether your home is one where family life is an addition to school life or one in which education gets scraped off. (And on the horizon looms the grim fact that 60 per cent of children still receive no education after fifteen.)

The English Educational System was long ago surveyed by the Government in a short, green pamphlet that, I dimly remember, was produced as part of the festivities when some Chinese visited England. Be that as it may, it proudly claimed "the System probably results in a greater variety of educational institutions than is to be found in any other country." Some of this variety is not really an advantage. It may include schools where boys still wear Elizabethan costume; but it also includes schools which are the old village school with the top class called by a new name, dreadfully sticking pins into one another until new premises are built for them

or for *their* children. There may be schools where they teach Russian or Film-appreciation; but there are also schools where any attempt to teach anything at all makes the staff liable to being beaten up by their pupils' big brothers. There are schools which hire a pipe-clayed band for Sports Day but are short of text-books. There are schools with parquet floors; but most of these are normally entered via the courts.

In the State System the choice will be made for you between (1) *Grammar Schools*, which often do get high-octane thought out of future professional men, but are sometimes full of prematurely aged masters numbly doing what their grandfathers did with sums and

sentences. (2) *Technical Schools*, which are often good not only technically but at teaching subjects like English and (3) *Modern Schools*, which are justly irritated at being so often dismissed simply as what happens to children who fail the eleven-plus. Some of these are good even at academic subjects, though some of them are slums where sullen gangsters yawn away the time till school-leaving while the staff scribble realistic novels.

The argument over Comprehensive Schools, where different varieties are combined in one institution, has cooled down a bit now there are real Comprehensive Schools to argue over. They need not be overwhelming factories. Tutorial groups can give the new boy a



"We keep her at school for A-level Biology and then she picks that!"



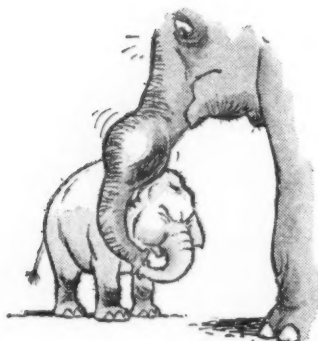
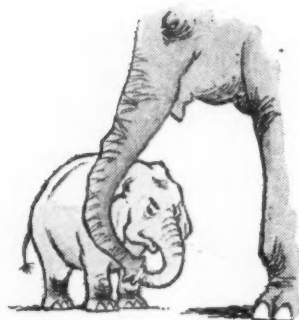
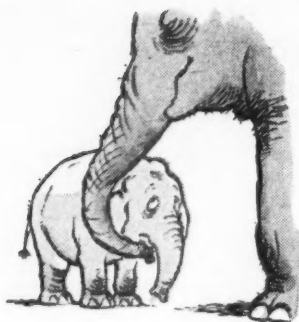
manageable environment (after all, even a school of four hundred can be pretty overwhelming at first). The objection that the Head cannot have a deep knowledge of all the boys is not one generally raised by the boys themselves. The fear of bureaucracy is exaggerated. Many Heads of smaller schools are overwhelmed with paper. I have met one who had to spend so much time at his desk doing things like checking stock-lists that for two terms he had not set foot in a class-room. With the larger school it becomes economic to have one or two whole-time administrators. Surely, adjutants and quarter-masters give C.O.s more, not less, time for the important big things like planning and the important little things like wandering round and chatting. As for

the sausage-machine argument, the larger the staff the more chance there is of fitting out the unusual boy with work and activities that suit him. Probably the great disadvantage is that the non-academic majority may succeed in eroding the time given to work of a standard that the really clever boy can and should do.

Outside the State system you can try the non-profit-making schools (I mean intentionally non-profit-making), which range from schools for the handicapped or schools for the children of members of some sect to the Public Schools, the best of which are very good indeed—far too good to be so few. Of course, part of their high standard comes simply from money flowing in from blessed founders, wealthy Old Boys and dizzily

fee-paying parents. This allows a staffing ratio above the national average. At the top of the school nearly all teaching may be individual. A good deal of the secret is the matter-of-course assumption that high standards in learning, games and other activities will be reached. Pressure is severe, though few faint under it, and boys often reach the Universities a couple of years more mature than boys from Grammar Schools. The profit-making Secondary Schools vary even more wildly than other areas of English education. Careful reconnaissance is needed if you do not want to get caught.

Parents who have any real choice in their child's future ought to look first not at buildings but at people. The efficiency and above all the happiness of



the staff may permanently affect him. You want him treated as an end, not as a means. Bad teachers use children as instruments in their careers or their feuds. Failures gang up against children who seem likely to do better than they have done. (Quite a lot of history depends on the envy of the third-rate for the first-rate.) I could tell some grim tales of awakening minds' being shut with a bang. The teacher who is the real thing likes to find a child who is abler than he is but can profit by his help.

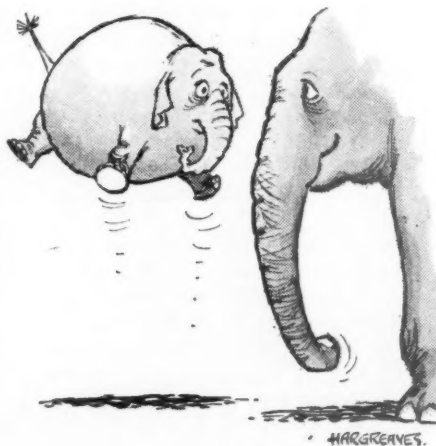
Any reconnaissance might well include the staff accommodation. Is it spacious and comfortable and apparently lived in by gay and intelligent people or is it a shabby corner, comparing unfavourably with the quarters provided for a caretaker or porter? Few schools would go to the length of faking a Common Room. It is even more important to look closely at the Head, though judging Heads is not really work for amateurs, as appointments sometimes show. A good Head can make a school and a bad Head can ruin one, all within a term or two, and a ruined school may mean damaged lives for thousands of children and perhaps for their children.

It is odd that with all the investigations that English education gets submitted to nobody bothers much about the selection of Heads. There seems to be a conspiracy of politeness. The headmasters and headmistresses of England are quite as important as the doctors, yet doctors start off with a training that lasts for years and years and can be sued if they are not up to date. Whoever sued a headmaster for

gross professional negligence or, in the case of a privately-owned school, for getting money under false pretences? Heads are appointed in a number of ways including, thank heaven, on merit. They also reach power by purchase, perhaps after winning a football pool, by knowing people who know people, by adroitness in their choice of hobby, by convincing predominantly non-expert committees that they have various irrelevant qualities, such as being able to get work out of the staff or being good Union men, or by luck. While the Senior Physician of a hospital will often be consulted on points of medicine by his junior colleagues, a Head may be either the best teacher on the staff or unbelievably dreadful. I have known eleven Heads, of whom only two were, professionally speaking, up to the average of their staffs. Two, and possibly a third, were crooks. One was very near to being a mental defective. Now even werewolves would not surprise me.

The answer is not to interfere with the rights of appointing bodies but to insist that all the candidates they consider should be chosen from a *National List*, and getting on this should be quite something. It ought to be compiled by a partly lay but mainly professional body, at least equal in status to the Civil Service Commissioners. Being placed on the *National List* would give a teacher a status comparable to passing Staff College or getting a Master's Certificate or becoming an M.R.C.P., though I am not suggesting very much of an examination. Men and women who knew the job at first hand would be able to weed out the mere careerists, the mere administrators, the mere scholars and the mere examination-crammers. This simple and cheap reform would professionalize the profession, help to reduce the drift away from teaching and give the parents some guarantee that their child was not at the mercy of a quack.

However, this does not seem to be the kind of thing that interests parents. What really excites them is whether their son has lost his school-cap or whether the staff wear gowns or whether playing for the 1st XV leads to meeting suitable girls or whether the school gets on TV. Give parents a small iced cake in a tent on the anniversary of the school's foundation and they never think of



checking the time-table. Being a teenager's parent is arduous enough, they would grumble, without having to worry over whether the Head is kind to his underlings. After all, they are under constant pressure to take an interest in puppets or chemistry or cricket or other teenagers with matted hair and slouches. In some schools they have to dress up in vicarious competition and eat strawberry sundaes at matches. In others the worst hazard is spending an evening in a class-room listening to tired teachers selling the school's way of life. Then the values of the great throbbing world have to be upheld against such competing delights as dedicating your life at fourteen, for example, to making mobiles or studying the History of Agriculture, while simultaneously the values of school have to be supported against the delights of meeting nice children at pony clubs, going on jazz-and-razor forays to neighbouring boroughs, sitting foggily before the TV set or writing poems to the hit of the Hit Parade, the curate or the probation officer.

How far should the kind of education that awaits your teenager be due to your pocket, how much to his ability? If you work and save why should you not be as free to spend the money on giving your children a flying start as to spend it on drink? On the other hand, many people feel that selling education is as distasteful as selling religion. It is one of those questions that look different the nearer you get to home. Think about the human race and most

people would feel that every child should have a fair chance. Think of your own family and it is obvious that you must get them the best education you can. A nice comfortable way of looking at it is that in present conditions one should do what one can for one's own family while strongly pressing the Government to improve education generally.

Much more could be done. Parents, if they often do not get the education for their children that they want, always get the educational system they deserve; I have never heard any candidate heckled about education at an election. Far too much of what improvement there has been this century has come from the pressure of teachers and the odd publicist; far too little from mums and dads. Only their steady insistence will produce smaller classes, fewer extraneous burdens on teachers, more evenness between the educational chances of children living in different places and more care in filling the key posts, the Headships.

On re-reading these fighting words they strike me as being a trifle prejudiced, slightly slanted in favour of the rank and file who cope in the classroom. Good! The road to limbo is paved with fair-mindedness.

Other contributors to this series will be:

The Rev. SIMON PHIPPS
C. H. ROLPH
SIR JOHN WOLFENDEN

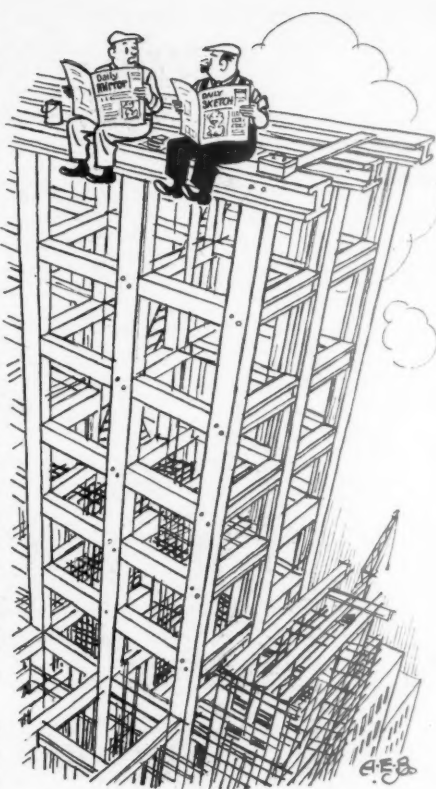
Open Letter to the German Press

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

GENTLEFOLK,—Dr. Adenauer is too sweeping in his accusations that the British press is "wire-pulling" and working to impair Anglo-German relations. The term "British press" includes this magazine, and this magazine indulges neither in wire-pulling nor in activities calculated to damage the friendship of our two peoples. On the contrary, gentlefolk, we of this magazine are indefatigably pro-German and seldom miss an opportunity to work terms like

Weltanschauung, Zeitgeist, Anschluss and Gesellschaft into our articles.

The other day one of your bombs, an unexploded missile, a relic from the last brief and unfortunate interruption in our lasting friendship, was discovered just outside our Waterloo (Southern Region) Station in London, and one of this magazine's reporters went along to take a look-see. Believe us, friends, that the whole incident—which included the closing down of all rail traffic for some hours—was received



"I suppose by rights we should be reading 'The Times.'"

with the greatest good humour by all concerned. Our reporter said that onlookers were most impressed by the size of the missile and expressed keen admiration, in general terms, for the skill and craftsmanship of the German workman—even to admitting that the odd faulty fuse proves nothing one way or the other. One passer-by remarked that, the conflict being over, the bomb was legally the property of your Government and should be returned to you to be melted down as scrap for your growing shipping industry. And this comment was quickly taken up by others of like mind with suggestions about various methods of freighting the thing back to you.

Dr. Adenauer would have had less to say about wire-pullers had he been present on this interesting occasion.

We admire so many things about Germany and the Germans, gentlefolk, that it is difficult to know how to phrase our praise. The shape of your country now! That is something. Surely no country in the world is so beautiful in

CHESTNUT GROVE

George Belcher, who observed the Cockney with fidelity, drew for Punch from 1906 to 1941. He died in 1947.



THE COVENANT.

"YOU BIN 'AVIN' SOME TROUBLE WITH YER LANDLORD, MRS. GREEN?"
 "YES—YER SEE WE ENTERED INTO A COVENANT TOGETHER, AND NOW 'E WANTS TO GET OUT OF IT."

June 3, 1925

outline—the long stretch from Denmark to Switzerland, rather like one of your famous sausages or one of your dachshunds, the sudden dramatic twists and turns in the line of the eastern frontier, the neat little tuck where you join with delightful old-world Czechoslovakia. Yes, we seldom look at the long lean contours of modern Germany without marvelling at the work of Mother Nature.

Then there are your picturesque customs and your language. What language is so gloriously guttural and glottal! Even in imitations—Charles Chaplin's for example—the richness and strength of the tongue is wonderfully apparent. And where, except in

your country (or are we forgetting Austria?), does one encounter that deliciously masculine dance with its knee and thigh slapping? And in what country, we'd like to know, can one hear such music as "O Mein Papa" and "The Little Drummer Boy"?

Little things. Yes, we admire your football. Did you not win the World Cup a few years ago? And did you not win the competition using the well-tried methods of your British friends? We loved you for that, gentlefolk, because you proved to the entire world that *our* brand of soccer is still superior to the fancy-pants game perfected by those non-Saxons the Brazilians, the Hungarians and the Spaniards. It is our

claim that Anglo-German football could lead the peoples of the earth back to sanity and peace and co-existence.

Then Von Cramm. How nice to see somebody playing at Wimbledon—as he was not so long ago—in long flannels. British flannels almost. Hardly worth mentioning? We do not think so. We took Von Cramm's flannels, gentlefolk, as we are sure they were intended, as a token of goodwill, of international amity and understanding. We regarded this gesture as a sign of Germany's ready acceptance of our native genius for games, and for our cricket in particular.

But on a more serious level, friends, we admire your skill and resolve in matters of reconstruction and production. You have amazed the world by the speed of your recovery and in so doing you have put us on our mettle. You see, we British believe in competition and therefore approve of competitors. And you Germans, better than any other people, know how to be competitors. The Japanese are a different proposition entirely: they fight unfairly, copying our designs even in such commodities as Samurai swords, lanterns and kimonos. You Germans are industrious but you don't plagiarize—though it is true that through your Krupp Stahlwerksverband you are getting rather close to our old idea of Iron and Steel Nationalization.

Dr. Adenauer, too, we admire. He has done great things for Germany, and it is a pity, as he nears the end of his term of office, that he should abuse all sections of the British press as wire-pullers and trouble-shooters.

Even as we write (to the ineffably beautiful music of your Wagner's *Meistersinger*) there is a report that another unexploded bomb has been unearthed in Dorset. And this one, it is rumoured, was dropped from one of your glorious Zeppelins way back in 1917. There's a good laugh in that for all of us, eh?

☆

"... It is not a plan at all. It is just a hotch-poth of other people's ideas. It is a scheme perfectly designed to drive Germany out of NATO, and America out of completely the Western Alliance. It America out of Europe, and to destroy is kind of blue print for bedlam."

East Anglican Daily Times

Just what we feel, actually.

Days in the Life of a Newshound

By MALCOLM BRADBURY

IN those long, long pauses at parties, when the liquor has run out and the mass of guests are pale green in the bathroom, people, low on small-talk, sometimes buckle to and ask me about my early years as a newshound. As a result of this, and the co-ordinated fact that I'm a congenital romancer, there are some spicy tales about my journalistic past in circulation which I'd like here and now to disavow.

The truth of the matter is, with me, I just wanted something to do indoors while it was raining. The first time I broke into print I was still at school, a gaunt pimply youth who kept catching his trousers legs in the chain of his bicycle. Detesting the school, my fellow-pupils and people generally with a detestation I have never since been able to match, I turned literary on them. One day there was a general election and the school, noting our general apathy about *everything*, tried to whip up enthusiasm by running a mock election of its own, with candidates and speeches and unfulfillable promises. So closely modelled on the real thing was it that I, as Liberal candidate, lost my deposit, which was sixpence; and casting around for a way of getting my sixpence back I decided to write it up in an article for the local paper.

The next day all was pandemonium. Taxis kept making circuits of the school, packed with reporters and photographers. Growing bolder, they stopped and entered the premises to take photographs of the washrooms. Finally they tried to find the candidates and interview them. The man from the *Daily Mirror* popped into classrooms wanting to know if any of our girl students, all grim specimens, with braces on their teeth and even on their ears, were thinking of getting married—or better still eloping. The headmaster was furious. He locked us up in the classrooms and raged about the landings, driving the pressmen out. Then he sent for me. He already disliked me, because I wore brown trousers, a calculated insult. Now he

wanted to expel me. I said that was unfair. I mentioned about the sixpence. I said I had detested the pressmen equally as much as he had. After a while he calmed down and gave me some very salutary advice. "Take my advice, Bradbury," he said, "never, *never* write for the press. It's a dirty habit, and only causes trouble. No gentleman does it." "I won't," I said.

After this I lay fallow for a while, until I went to university. Nowadays it is all right to have been to a provincial university, so I admit it; I was at a provincial university. Here I met a man called Michael Orsler, who was the editor of the university's literary magazine. Orsler has asked me to tell people that he discovered me, and this is true. When I first submitted my work to Orsler I was a timid youth, scarcely bold enough to leave my room. One day I was crouched there, emptying out the water with which my fellow undergraduates were in the habit of filling my shoes, when the door was flung open and "Gods, there's a stink in here!" cried a loud, *buxom* voice. It was Orsler. "You're a genius," he said, waving some seedy manuscripts which I had sent him, "you're like me."

In a week or so I was a changed man. I had become the editor of the literary magazine. I had been discovered, and to be discovered by Orsler was no small event in any man's life. He told me he was going to make me editor of his magazine. "Won't there be other candidates?" I asked. "I'll pull their ears off," said Orsler fiercely, and this he must have done, for they withdrew. As I have said, Orsler was a power in the university, and his progress about the establishment always reminded me of those mobile press conferences

that Mr. Truman used to give, when he would talk to the press as, dashing down the street and through the park, he took his constitutional. Orsler was always followed, at speed, by a crowd of people with whom he was engaged in different kinds of commerce and politics; and at the same time he would cry out loudly to practically everyone who passed him, fixing appointments, arranging marriages, selling his bicycle.

And so I became a pressman again. For I quickly discovered why Orsler should let the editorship pass to another. The editor had been newly delegated with the task not only of producing the magazine, with its little articles on Proust and its chaste advertisements for banks, but also of publishing a fortnightly newspaper, a rumbustious and gossipy affair loaded with news items, chitchat and spiteful commentary. It was rag week, and all the time things were happening—people kept stealing trophies from other universities, painting statues red, raiding the women's dormitories, getting arrested. Imagine me, a timid youth, not given to frivolities and finding the whole thing in rather doubtful taste, having to write a rumbustious column on the affair—and chronicle every event that occurred. For the whole of the first two issues, the only two issues, were written by myself. My fellow editors on the magazine, literary youths with glasses and girls who wrote poems beginning "I well



remember your soft kisses when . . ." displaying a unanimity and firmness of spirit that had been rare in their earlier dealings with me, rallied round magnificently; they resigned *en masse*. Daily I ran to and fro taking photographs of men in ballet skirts, interviewing the rag queen ("Do you like the male undergraduates at the university?" was my one question; "I think they're a shower," she said), attending dances and bonfires and plays. At the end of the week I was exhausted. I trudged up the hill back to the university, dispirited, yet full of relief. It was over. All day I had ridden around on lorries, while people threw tomatoes at me from the crowd and students from a rival institution had tried to overturn the lorry. I sat down at the typewriter and wrote: "A wonderful rag was had by all . . ."

The issue came out, followed by a barrage of protests. It seemed that in the tiny interval between my leaving the rag procession and its conclusion three people had fallen off lorries and broken their arms and several more had been thoroughly coated with tar by their rivals. Why, people demanded, vying

with each other to discredit me, are these facts being concealed? I told them how tired I was, and showed them the blisters on my feet, but they wouldn't listen. I set to to produce another issue, artfully packing it full of abuse and calumny and unfounded gossip. On the day of publication I sat in the paper's office, looking wan and eating cheese. Several people came in and asked for the editor, as they wanted to throw him into the lake. I told them he was away, in Dundee. Then, hastily gathering my things together, I went back and locked myself in my room, where I remained for a week until my cheese got too stale to eat. Then I came out and resigned, to general jubilation.

After this I forsook journalism, except for the odd passing encounter, until a chance incident one day last year, when I was visiting friends at one of the two non-provincial (and therefore unfashionable) universities. Deciding that I would like to hear a debate, if only to get on television, I went along to the union to try to inveigle my way in. As I reached the entrance some young fellow ahead of me in the queue was fumbling hopelessly with the catch

on the door. As a much-travelled man I was familiar with this type of fastening, and I shouted some advice. "Press," I shouted. "Press." Suddenly I was seized by the arm. "Did you say press, sir?" asked a steward politely. "Yes," I said. "This way," he said; suddenly I was rushed through the queue and I found myself, in some surprise, on the floor of the house, sitting at the press table.

As it happened, there had been some furore of late in the union, with allegations against the president and counter-allegations against the representatives of the university newspaper which had exposed the incident, and the press benches took up practically the entire floor of the house. There were a few undergraduates scattered about, but they looked uneasy and out of place. Next to me was a huge, bear-like man from *Time* magazine, who had a secretary to take down notes of things. "What's your paper?" he asked me. "Are you interviewing me?" I asked quickwittedly. "O.K., buster, take it easy," said the man from *Time*. On the other side was a cabal of persons from the university newspaper which had challenged the



"And wheeling round with 7th Armoured, I knocked them for six, as I knew I should."

president, and throughout the ensuing debate they would leap to their feet from time to time, shouting charges and making exposures. Soon the debate became irrelevant. Throughout the discussion, which was on the Wolfenden report's recommendations on homosexuality, people had kept referring to the corruption of the press in this matter. One of the speakers remarked that even if the house were to give an overwhelming and significant vote in favour of the recommendations this still would not be reported in the press. As a result, hostility mounted toward us throughout the chamber. People hissed at us now and then. Someone poked me.

The debate ended, and there was an overwhelming vote in favour of the Wolfenden recommendations. I sneaked out, and the next day I looked in the papers, and though there was a great deal about all the allegations and counter-allegations, there was *nothing* about the debate itself, or the vote. I felt, for the first time in my life, really corrupt—a proper newsman at last.



"That's the front door bell—will you answer it or shall I?"

Codicil Three

MUSIC and flowers are married in my mind,
The two sweet innocents that bless mankind,
For these can do no damage to the soul
(Save orchids, I am told, and Rock 'n' Roll).
How right that when Sir Malcolm takes his station
He wears—a legacy—a white carnation!
I, by his art so often fired and fanned,
Would now bequeath a bouquet to his band.

"Leader, Paul Beard"—King Fiddle—I suppose
Should have the king of British blooms, a rose—
Red for the Leader, white for all the rest:
For the Violas, rambles at the breast.
What for the Woodwind—Flute and Piccolo,
Bassoon and Clarinet and old Oboe?
For these, I think, the tender Daffodil,
Bluebell and Crocus, Anemone and Squill.
Their gentle voices fit the flags of Spring—
Though the Bassoon may be another thing.
No, I am not so sure about Bassoon:
He should have something that matures in June;
And in these days our scientific men
Can fashion any flower anywhen.

The other Strings I have not quite forgot.
The 'Cellos? Dahlias, do you think—or not?
High Sunflowers with a sober, shining face
Shall stand saluting by the Double Bass.

I feel that Gladioli might be worn
By the Cor Anglais—and perhaps the Horn,
And now, with due solemnity, I pass
To the tremendous problem of the Brass.
Great scarlet Cannas would be fitly flown
Above the Trumpet, Tuba and Trombone.

The Tympani? Not easy, but I see
Tall Tulips posed about the Tympani.
Percussion? By the Cymbals and the Drums
Massed Rhododendrons and Chrysanthemums:
And all the drummers, great and small, shall fix
Bright Lilies of the Valley on their sticks.

The lonely lady at the Harp shall wear
Gardenias (or Camellias) in her hair.
Upon the Harp let Honeysuckle climb;
Set at the foot Tobacco Plants and Thyme;
In any corner that is not filled yet
Wallflowers, Hyacinth, and Violet.

Thus with sweet Sound will properly be blent
The sister charms of Colour and of Scent—
A storm of music in a sea of bloom,
Man's melodies, God's flowers and perfume.
And, come to think of it, the players might
Be costumed better, not in black but white.
A band should not look like a bowler hat:
Executors, pray make a note of that.

Simple, you see,
Here endeth Codicil Three.

— A. P. H.

The Wandering Id

By MARJORY JOHNSTONE

NEVER again will I be tempted to eat scampi provençale at an after-theatre supper party. I punch my pillow savagely, trying in vain to find a cool spot. I think reproachfully of my Super-Ego, which has apparently had no difficulty in going to sleep, allowing all those basement lodgers to pour up the stairs. No doubt Freud would have some slick explanation, but that doesn't help one bit to exorcize the grim procession of ghosts which march inside my eyelids. I toss from side to side in an attempt to escape them, but they are all there—the time I was caught reading *Lady Chatterly's Lover* concealed in a brown paper cover bearing the title Kirby's *French Grammar* in heavily inked capitals: the occasion on a war-darkened railway platform when I hurled myself with gay abandon into the arms of someone

else's boy-friend: the many, many times I have precipitately plunged into quite the wrong telephone conversation with disastrously the wrong person.

I writhe in remembered agony, and to distract my tenacious memory try to recall my favourite pieces of music, but all I can hear booming away in my head is the Academic Festival Overture. I have tried to avoid hearing it ever since that time . . .

For three years of sweat and swot I had imagined that my graduation day would be a solemn occasion to be recalled with pride and gentle nostalgia for years to come. I made my bow to the Chancellor with great dignity, stepped back, caught my heel in the hem of my gown borrowed from my 5ft. 10 in. friend, flailed my arms wildly in a vain attempt to regain my balance, and ended by making the Chancellor

an obeisance worthy of an Oriental potentate.

Well, what does it matter, I ask myself bravely. Do I really care all that much what people think of me? Do I? Well, what about the time in the restaurant? No, I scream silently, I *won't* think about it: I don't have to. But it's all there, mirror clear, in excruciating detail.

I had just started my very first job, and was living in cheap digs, where everything was a shilling in the slot. Just about this time, as far as I was concerned, the shilling appeared to be withdrawn from circulation, and I was forever being caught cooking omelets when the gas went out, and not another shilling to be had in London.

A friend of my mother's, very rich, very grand, had asked me, as an act of charity, to lunch at a very smart



restaurant. She paid the bill and then, to my consternation, I saw her leave two separate shillings as part of the tip. I *couldn't* ask her for them, so with great presence of mind I dropped my gloves as we rose to go, excused myself outside the door, and hurried back. Joyfully I pocketed the shillings, and was just hunting for the florin to replace them when I had That Feeling in the back of my neck. I turned to find that my hostess had politely followed me back into the restaurant, and was watching with the sort of expression usually reserved for bit players in horror films.

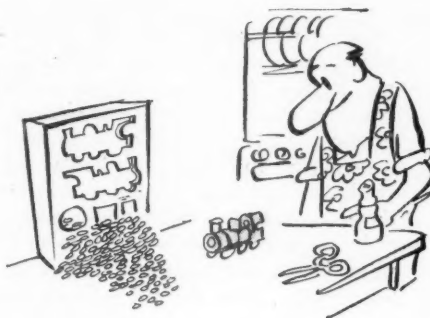
I heave the bedclothes off, blushing to the soles of my feet. I try frantically to think of something more pleasant. What about the children? What, inquires my Id, about Adam Trotter and the fire-engine?

Adam lived next door to us, and I waged a long, silent and bitter battle against his habit of taking all my little boy's toys and breaking them. I had just bought a delightful fire-engine with a gleaming brass bell and a retractable ladder, and I was determined that this time Adam wasn't going to get his predatory little hands on it. All afternoon my son had played happily with it under my watchful eye; I left him for half an hour to get tea, and when I looked out of the window, there was Adam going in his own front gate clutching the precious fire-engine. Seething with maternal rage I leapt after him, and disregarding his bellows, wrenched the toy from his hand. I was returning in triumph to my own house when Mrs. Trotter's cold voice called from her window, "I'll just have my child's fire-engine back, *if* you don't mind!" My hot protests died unspoken—just at that moment my son came toddling after me with his own fire-engine under his arm.

I raise my leaden eyelids, and look at the bedside clock. Only 3.30—there may be hours of this yet. I struggle with the thought of getting up and making a cup of tea, but while I hesitate I recognize in myself symptoms of my release. I'm getting drowsy. I'll just recite some nice, soothing poetry to myself to help me drop off. I begin with Old Nod the shepherd. "Softly along the road of evening," I murmur sleepily.

I recited it at the school concert when I was nine. It was very well received,

Man in Apron by *Lenny*



the audience called for an encore, and I was elated with success as I came off the platform. Waiting for me was my bitterest foe.

"You needn't look so pleased with yourself," she hissed. "Your knickers were showing all the time!"

Put that Question Down —It's Loaded

WHERE did I come from, Mummy?
Brings not a blush to my cheek;
Where am I going to, Mummy?

My answer is clear, though bleak.
But I see a question coming
That will properly set me back:
Who are *WE* up for, Mummy—
Gaitskell, Grimond or Mac?

Oh, why was I born to set them right
About idols and feet of clay?
To daub their beautiful black-and-white
With indecisive grey?
Progenitress of Parliaments,
A parent is asking you—
Have you *NO-ONE* better to be up for
Than Mac or Jo or Hugh?

— KATHARINE DOWLING

Pillory

Readers say what they dislike, as requested by A.P.H.

NO INTERVAL

Whenever the B.B.C. can't quite fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds'-worth they insist on putting up a voice to tell us about all the lovely talks, double-bass recitals, cooking commentaries, and so on, we're going to hear later on, or to-morrow. There's enough pluggery and trailery elsewhere, heaven knows; couldn't we have a few moments of silence, or has this come to be an abhorred, shameful thing, to be avoided as an indency or obscenity?

J. K. CAMBER, NORWICH

HORNCHESTRA

There is a traffic line from here to eternity, through no one's fault. The Angry Young, Middle-aged or Old Man in the middle of it blares his hooter at the man in front of him. This can achieve nothing. Pure sound unaccompanied by action has achieved nothing since the fall of the Walls of Jericho. The only contribution the hooter makes is one more stab of senseless din, one more chunk of peevish exhibitionism. Sometimes his example is followed by other hooligans so that a screaming symphony sets in. These men should be deported.

NORMAN HARDING, DOVER

A rousing St. George's Day appeal to the youth of England

SLAY YOUR OWN DRAGON

By B. A. YOUNG

IT was St. George himself who was put to death on April 23, not the dragon, although to be honest little more is known about the one than the other. There is a school that believes St. George to have been a grocer of Cappadocia. He became an army contractor ("What's for dinner? Dragon again?") and a tax-gatherer and finally Archbishop of Alexandria, a promotion equally rare to-day in both NAAFI and the Inland Revenue. Also it is quite possible that the Saint was not martyred by Diocletian at Nicomedia on April 23, 303, but at Lydda in 250, give or take a few years. There are even ill-disposed folk who claim that it was not St. George at all that slew the dragon (who first appeared in *The Golden Legend* in 1275) but Perseus. The rock from which Perseus delivered Andromeda by slaying a monster was at Joppa (now the Jaffa Sporting Club), only a short bus-ride from Lydda (now Lydda), where St. George lived.

Be all this as it may, St. George has

exactly the right characteristics for an English national saint, and his example is a splendid one for the young people of this country, in whom the dragon-slaying instinct seems to be lying fallow at the moment.

It is no good arguing that the younger generation doesn't have a fair chance because no one will supply them with any dragons. St. George did not sit in his office waiting for people to bring a dragon to his door and ask him to slay it for them. In point of fact he had to go all the way to Silene in Libya, where there was a dragon inhabiting a pool, and the Princess Sabra—well, suppose we go back a stage: it seems there was this dragon, whose normal ration was two sheep a day, not an unreasonable diet, one would have said, for a beast requiring all those extra calories for the smoke and fire. But the locals ran out of sheep and the dragon had to be fed on human beings; and villagers being what they are it was no time at all before they ran so low on those too that Princess Sabra found herself requisitioned as the *plat du jour*.

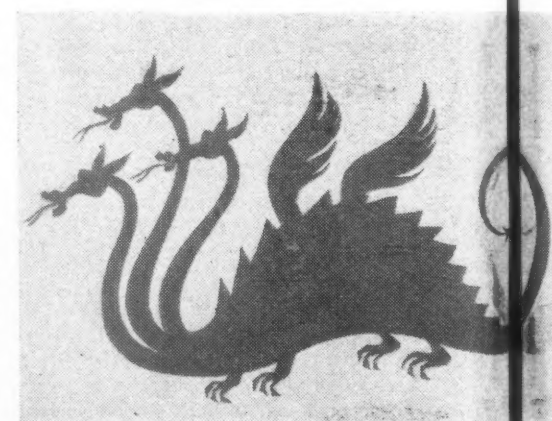
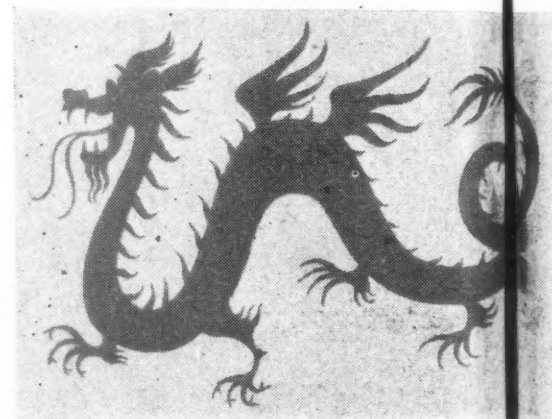
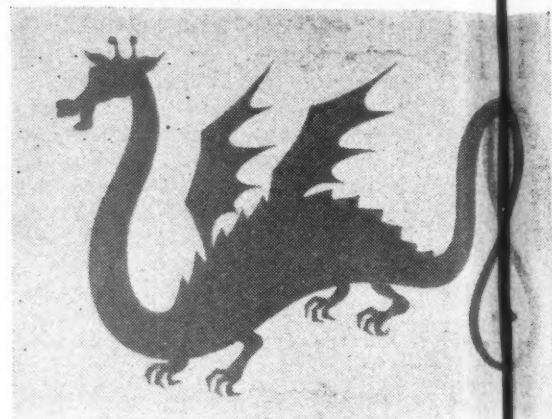
It was at this stage that St. George appeared. His methods are worthy of attention. He did not slay the dragon outright, but only wounded it to such an extent that it submitted to being led back to the village on the end of the princess's girdle. Not until St. George was sure of a good house did he administer the final *coup de grâce*.

So it is clear that no young Englishman can expect to meet, let alone slay, a dragon simply by sitting in his bed-sitter like Jimmy Porter, bleating "How I long for a little human enthusiasm," or for a dragon if that is what he really thinks he wants. The problem to-day is three-fold:

- (1) where to look for dragons,
- (2) how to recognize them when seen,
- (3) how to slay them.

Real dragons of flesh, blood and fire have almost died out, having for the most part been slain by saints. Even

Dragons' caves like this are now growing increasingly difficult to find. Below is the well-known cave at Wantage. The dragon is off duty.



KNOW YOUR ENEMY.—Top, the Mark I dragon as used by St. George. Centre, the Mark II, as modified for Chinese service with increased cruising-speed and hotter breath. Bottom, the Mark III dragon with triple warhead, still operating in comparatively saintly manner.

of England to live in the spirit of the illustrious Patron Saint

in China, where they lingered on until quite recently, their numbers have been drastically reduced by the Mao régime in its relentless pursuit of vermin. The best dragons to go for nowadays are intangible, such as were referred to by

Thomas Moore—

In England the garden of beauty is kept
By a dragon of prudery placed within call.

Prudery is quite a modest dragon, though a bit of slaying would do it no harm. A most savage dragon called Intolerance has long ago finished its sheep-ration and is hungering for human sacrifices. There is a nauseating new dragon called Sentimentality, which eats kiddies, doggies, old folk and the physically handicapped, and spits them out into the pages of the daily newspapers and the Light Programme. Other dragons worth slaying are Juvenile Delinquency, H-bomb, and Racial Conflict.

There is also a dragon on the Welsh flag, but this is only a symbolical one put there to remind the Welsh of their bad luck in not having St. George for their patron saint.

Slaying contemporary dragons, as you



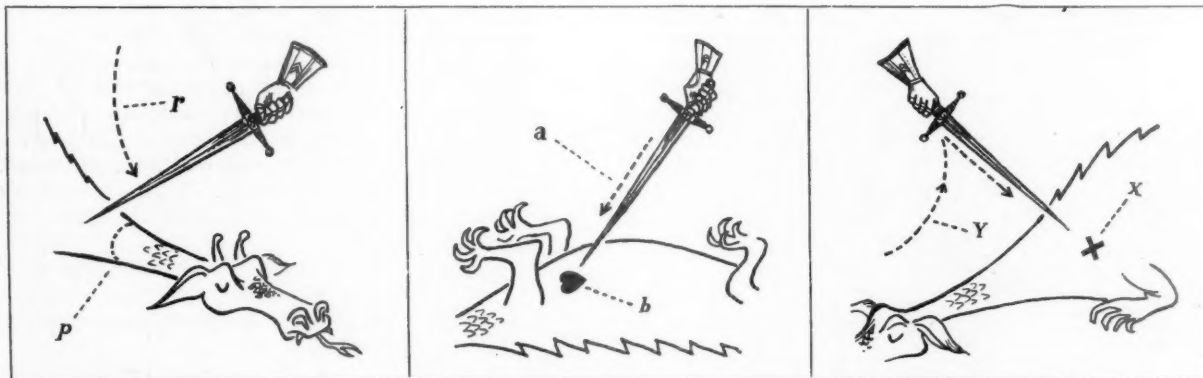
Recommended position for slaying dragons of all early types. Note firm seat and strong grip on lance. The lance is the special long anti-dragon model enabling the slayer to keep well clear of the dragon's breath.

can see, is not so simple a matter as St. George had to do with. However, the broad principles still work. One of them is, never go for the dragon while it is still in the sheep-eating stage. Wait until there is a princess on the verge of sacrifice and then rush in; you will earn the plaudits and the thanks of everyone, instead of angry expostulations like "You cruel thing, why can't you leave it alone? It's not doing you any harm, is it?"

Remember also this business about wounding the dragon first and then

leading it back to where the press cameras are. The object of this is not simply to get yourself extra publicity; it is to give your princess, or whoever is representing her, a share of the credit, and also to make sure that people believe your claim. If you dispatch your dragon in the middle of the desert there will not be lacking envious people who will allege that the beast had actually died of foot-and-mouth or an over-heated firebox or some cause equally natural, and was already dead when you found it.

Below are shown various methods of giving the coup de grâce. The left-hand diagram illustrates the classic, or Royal St. George, method, with the head sliced cleanly off at the neck. In the centre is an alternative method for use on dragons with extra-tough necks. The right-hand diagram shows an interesting if rather flashy variant of this for use in front of large audiences.



dragon as by St. George, the Chinese servant with in-
m, the Man dragon
ively saintly.

Babylonians in My Life

By PATRICK RYAN

BEING uneducated, I have to walk miles to avoid those women with millboards doing market research for encyclopædias. One of them asks me to list the things I know nothing about and we're going to be camping out on the street-corner for two or three days. And top of my list of ignorance would be the Babylonians.

When I was at school, except for Boadicea, Alfred's cakes and Harold's eyeful of arrow, there just wasn't any history before 1485. Before that it was all flint-axes, protoplasm and Sir Mortimer Wheeler.

Nowadays, as my daughter has taught me, the school-teachers start right at the beginning. My daughter is currently nine, hula-hooped and nautical, and has a thing about Nelson. On our last visit to London we went to Greenwich to see the grisly holes in his tunic and underwear, and noted that the log of the *Victory* was in the British Museum.

So next day to Bloomsbury, and we located the log in the Manuscript Room.

"He was very brave," she said, leaning over the case. "But he wasn't a very good writer. I don't think Miss Chater would have given him any stars."

"The sea was stormy," I said, "and he only had one arm. I'd like to see your Miss Chater produce any copper-plate in a rough sea with one arm tied behind her back."

"It must be hard to write with one arm. How do you hold the paper straight?"

"You could hold it with your stump."

"Supposing you hadn't got a stump?"

"Well—I suppose you could lean down and hold it with your chin."

"Then you'd probably stick yourself in the face with your pen-nib. How would you write if somebody cut your arm off? Right up to here."

"I'd use a typewriter."

"But how would you hold down the key for capitals?"

"With a pencil in my teeth."

"But supposing they took out all your teeth, as well?"

I hadn't come all the way to the British Museum for one of her crazy inquiries. I can get them at breakfast any day just by lowering the paper to find my nerve- tonic. To distract her from the one-armed problem I said "Come and see an Egyptian mummy."

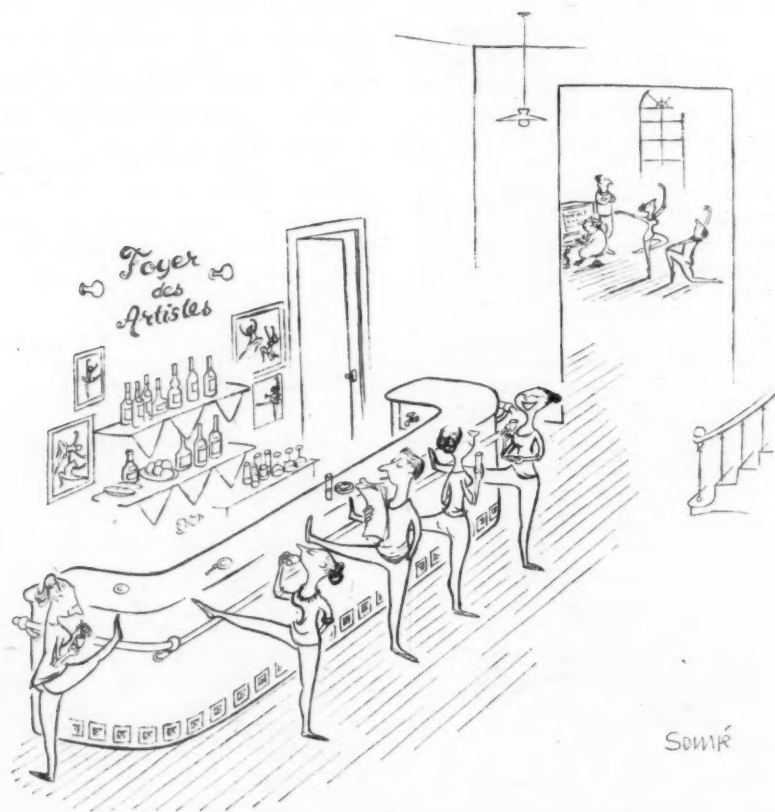
It worked and we went upstairs. I never realized before just how many mummies we taxpayers have got stored away in those long, quiet acres of Egyptian Rooms in Bloomsbury. We've got more mummies than Members of Parliament, and possibly a good thing too. Rows and rows of them, two and three in a bed, and standing-room only for junior members. If ever there's a boom in the mummy market we should be all right for the remainder of our post-war credits.

She enjoyed herself reading the recipe for mummy-making, especially the part about scooping out the brains and viscera and putting them into canopic jars, and then we wandered out of the mummy section and into the heart of Egyptology. Before us, as far as the eye could see, stretched a vista of glass-filled, clay-coloured rooms. We were the only moving objects in a silent petrified aquarium, and the peace—brother, it was wonderful!

Before you throw up the whole thing, shave your head and go into that monastery, try a few Friday afternoons in the Third Egyptian Room. Knots untied inside my head and inner tensions flowed out of my ears as we drifted among the eternal silences of tablets, urns, scarabs and amulets, everything rain-washed, desiccated, age-old and broken. I was drinking in the tranquillity and studying a nineteenth dynasty lipstick holder when my daughter put paid to peace and holy quiet.

"There it is!" she yelled, pointing into the distance. "That's it! Just like the picture in Miss Chater's history book!"

And off she went at full gallop,





"But we are a commune in a way—dreaming is a most exhausting group activity."

whooping in excitement, dragging me one-handed behind her. Our shoes clattered like sacrilege on the parquet, her shouts and my complaints echoed through the marble halls, hidden professors bobbed up from behind statues, attendants appeared from nowhere . . . On we went, like the hammers of hell, belting back through the dynasties, a thousand years passing at every stride, weaving among cat-gods, side-stepping sacred crocodiles, swerving round cases of cuneiform.

"What is it?" I gasped. "What's sent you off your head?"

"Hammurabi!" she yelled. "There it is. Hammurabi and the Sun-god."

Two of the professors joined in and ran along beside us. One was just curious, the other thought the place was on fire.

"Don't panic," he muttered as he loped along. "For God's sake, don't panic."

Electric bells like burglar-alarms started to ring all over the building . . . where once peace had reigned was now all pandemonium . . . an attendant came suddenly into our path . . . if he

hadn't ducked behind a Coptic bull we'd have trampled him to death . . . Back through the Assyrians we raced—a hundred kings flashed by . . . great empires died in the wind of our passing . . . a few more millennia saw the shape of our heels and we were clear through to the Babylonian Room.

"There it is," she said, shooting diagonally across to the left-hand corner and shrieking to a stop before a large dark monolith about eight feet high. "Isn't it wonderful? Fancy me finding the Hammurabi Stone all by myself!"

Her eyes were beacons of delight, she held out a tender hand and caressed the girt block of basalt. To her it was clearly the end of the rainbow, the most wonderful surprise of her life. To me it was just big, black and scratched.

"That's the Sun-god," she said, pointing to the picture carved on the top quarter. "And he's giving the laws to Hammurabi."

"Who's Hammurabi?" I asked.

The curious professor came up.

"My dear man," he said, looking at me as if I'd appeared in his apple,

"don't you know who Hammurabi was?"

"No," I said. "I'm sorry."

"I know," said my daughter, "he was King of Babylon and he made the first laws."

"That's right," said the professor. "And this is the Hammurabi Stone. Now, down here, it tells you all about it . . ."

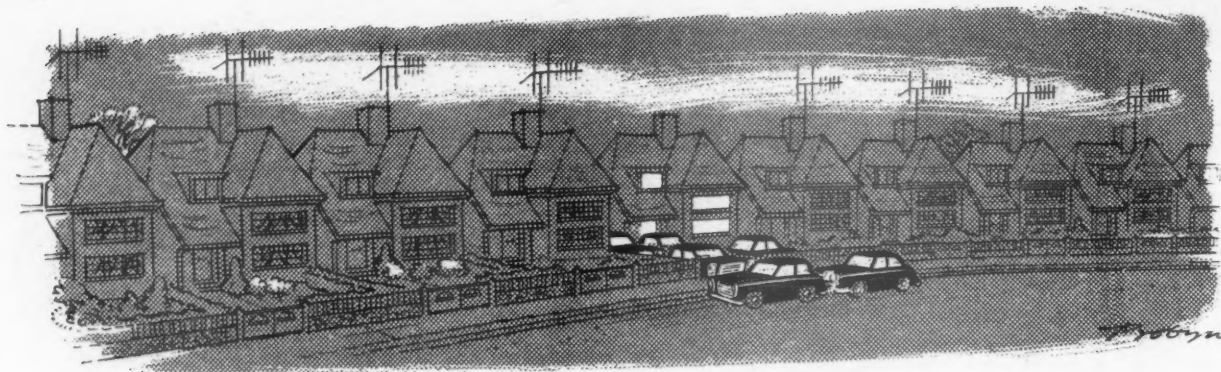
My daughter and the professor knelt down on the floor and discussed the scratches. The attendant came over and joined in. I turned to speak to the professor who thought we were on fire, but he avoided me and knelt down with the rest. They hate you if you're uneducated.

I tried once or twice to get into the conversation, but they froze me out. I wandered over to the other side of the room where a man was polishing the floor around a fragment of Ur.

"Good afternoon," I said. "Not many draws up last week, were there?"

"No," he said. "But I got six up though. Arsenal did me a bad turn."

"Did they?" I said. "They've been a bit chancy all the season."



"You can't trust 'em no more. They ain't like the old days, are they?"

"No," I said. "They ain't."

We got on to talking about the virtues of the block four-by-four perm over the any four pairs from eight, and I bet those Hammurabi experts wouldn't have understood a blind word we were saying. They clammed up after about ten minutes, shook hands all round, and my daughter came to collect me.

"Miss Chater is going to go right through the ceiling with surprise," she said, "when I tell her I've actually seen the Hammurabi Stone. She may have a picture of it in her history book but I bet she's never been all the way to the British Museum to see it."

Down in the hall we asked the post-card counter for a picture of the Stone.

"I'm sorry," said the young woman, "but we do not keep any postcards of the Hammurabi Stone. There is not sufficient demand."

My daughter was thunderstruck. It was all I could do to get her out of the place without setting about somebody. Going down the steps she carried on just like a grown woman.

"Fancy that! Did you ever hear anything like it? No postcards of the Hammurabi Stone. *Everybody* knows about the Hammurabi Stone. It's the very first picture in the history book. You'd think they'd at least have a post-card of anything important like that."

At the gates she turned and sneered back at the building.

"Well, I don't think much of that museum, I must say. Not a patch on that one at York. They had picture postcards of simply everything there..."

The British Museum shrank back a pace into the evening shadows and we left it to its shame.

Gaining Face

Britain has signed a cultural pact with Moscow

IF exhibitions, lectures and translations
 Don't sweeten Anglo-Soviet relations,
 Why not on cultural missions
 Send bebies of beauticians
 Dispensing beauty-culture preparations?

The Soviet popsy leaping from the tractor,
 Where midges and mosquitoes have attacked her,
 Desires with deep emotion
 The beauty-cake and lotion
 Of capitalist bourgeois manufacture.

She's tops in agriculture and athletics,
 She passed in dialectics and æsthetics,
 But from Moscow to Mongolia
 She's prone to melancholia,
 Depressed by nauseous national cosmetics.

The queen of the industrial collective
 Before her looking-glass must be objective;
 She's healthy, buxom, blooming,
 But in need of facial grooming,
 And glamour on the ration is defective.

Her brow to frost and sunburn she exposes,
 She's rubicund with nature's misplaced roses,
 She's bound to feel inferior
 When from Kharkov to Siberia
 There are ninety-seven million shiny noses.

So why not win half Russia's population
 By spreading beauty-cultural education?
 State beauty-parlours shake up,
 For making-up use make-up,
 And base firm friendship on a matt foundation.

— OLGA KATZIN

Essence of



Parliament

CAPTAIN KERBY and some of his friends have put down a curious motion demanding a free pardon for Colonel Wintle. Pardoned or unpardoned, it must be confessed that Colonel Wintle seems to be doing pretty well for himself. After all, a trouser is a trouser and a solicitor is a solicitor, and neither the moving finger nor Her Majesty's pardon can make it that a trouser was up when it was in fact down. More interesting and more curious were Mr. Callaghan's accusations or allegations about what happens to income-tax returns when they are sent to be pulped. If they are really sent to Cardiff docks to be exported and then in fact dropped on the quay for Mr. Callaghan to pick up, that is indeed, as the Chancellor confessed, a matter for concern. But even more is it a matter for curiosity. Who, one wonders, is that odd foreigner who is willing to buy the income-tax returns of manufacturers in the Potteries? What does he buy them for? and how much does he pay for them?

This was all but the prelude to Monday's debate of final washing-up of the Budget. Gallup polls, popping out on Monday morning, had served to give an indication, whether reliable or not, that the Budget was not immediately proving so great a vote-catcher for the Government as had at first been imagined, when even the *Daily Herald* had hailed it in language that would have appeared fulsome if its measured encomiums had originated in the paid propaganda of the Conservative Central Office. The Galloway poll, on the other hand, seemed to show that the opposition to it was not such a vote-winner for the Socialists. People may not be all that keen on King Charles, but few of them, it seems, are such fools as to kill him to make James

king. So the Socialists over the week-end decided to adopt the dangerous procedure of swapping horses while crossing their stream. The Budget which in Mr. Wilson's mouth on Wednesday had been "an assignment with the General Election" had by the following Monday in Mr. Robens' mouth become a sop to the rich. It was not, as Mr. Simon adroitly pointed out, very likely to be both, and the Socialist change of front, whether or not it will do them good in the country, made them cut an inglorious figure in the debating chamber. Meanwhile it was disturbing to learn that, while the Government was boasting that it was holding all other prices steady, the price of passports was being doubled—and that without either notice or legislation. A formidable and unusual trio of Mr.



Mr. Iain Macleod

Ernest Davies, Dame Florence Horsbrugh and Mr. Aneurin Bevan had whatever Parliamentary expression may most closely correspond to kittens at this invasion of our liberties, and Mr. Robert Allen's plea that "after all, we need the money" hardly made things any better. It seems

that the Government collects over £1,000,000 a year from fees for passports which cost them only £400,000 to issue. They make a cool profit of some three-quarters of a million, and as it is hard to see any purpose that passports serve this is simply a form of arbitrary tax. Wednesday, with post-war credits, was a tranquil day. No one was likely to say much against their payment. The debate was mainly interesting for Mr. Houghton's speech. Mr. Houghton is the most engaging of men and has a passion for financial statistics such as

coarser men reserve only for an *inamorata*. He strokes them gently as others might stroke a faithful dog. The rate of interest on delayed post-war credits is not to him, it is true, quite as exciting as the calculation of an income-tax liability, but it is still one of the great adventures of life. Mr. Houghton rises quite above such vulgar feelings as

party passion when he has thus an opportunity to walk with beauty. It is altogether delightful—especially to those of the profane vulgar who do not know these thrills—that a man should be imbued with so pure a passion, particularly in the House of Commons, and it is wonderful to see him stand-

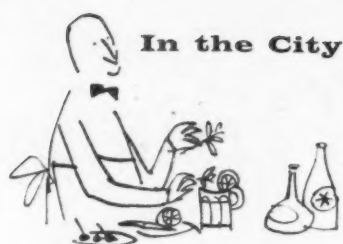


Capt. Henry Kerby

ing there like a little steam-engine anxious to be off.

How different a man is Mr. Butler! Watching Mr. Butler is like watching the innings of a great but temperamental batsman. He has all the strokes and can make them if he cares, but every now and again, just for the hell of it and to prove that it is only a game after all, he must needs do something comic. So on Wednesday he was content to agree with Mr. Bevan that what goes up must come down; on Thursday he was fighting against the Osborne-Pannell Panel behind him, refusing, however clamorous the demand, to flog, to birch, to hang or to deport. The ranks of Tuscan opposite to him did not even pretend that they forbore to cheer. Mr. Renton stood loyally by Mr. Butler's side, not quite certain whether he was Herminius or Spurius Lartius. It was the reaction of the Roman ranks behind—of the Pannell Panel—which was less certain. Mr. Pannell seemed at one point ready to give Mr. Renton the lie direct, if only the Speaker would let him, and Mr. Osborne was very angry indeed.

— PERCY SOMERSET



In the City

Russians Want It On Tick

IF all goes well politically with the little and big Summit meetings trade between Britain and Soviet Russia can be expected to leap ahead. The Russians are all agog for it and are preparing a warm and stimulating welcome for the British trade delegation which is due to leave for Moscow soon. Great activity is to be seen at the Soviet Trade Delegation which operates from the bracing vicinity of Karl Marx's tomb in Highgate Cemetery.

The £200,000,000 shopping list which Messrs. B. and K. trailed behind them when they visited this country in 1956 still has most of its items unticked. The disappearance of Mr. B's initial from the order list has been compensated by the addition of a new item, which is "credit." The Russians want more than ever but they are less willing to pay cash down than in past years. They require credit and it must be long and cheap.

Until recently the Russians were always prepared to plonk their coin on the barrel-head, and if the supply of cash ran out to supplement it by sales of gold, silver or platinum. This pleasant tinkle of the precious metals could meet only small deficits. The Russians, while they were bent on capital investment first and last, were debarred by the strategic embargo of the Western Powers from importing many of the machine tools and other such goods they needed. They found the wherewithal to pay for what they bought by exports of timber and coarse grains, which could come into Britain without restriction. In addition there were some interesting swaps under which we gave them a quota for matches if they took some of our white fish, and another deal by which they bought British textiles and we gave them quotas for tinned salmon and crab-meat.

Whatever gap was left by these compensatory arrangements was covered by exports of precious metals. These arrangements will not stand up to the much bigger trade the Russians now have in mind. The consumer is at last having a taste of jam to-day. He is due

to have more clothes, boots and shoes, household goods, motor-cars, toilet preparations. When a tedious succession of five-year plans has been geared to the production of coal, oil, steel, tractors—not to mention tanks, submarines and sputniks—the sudden need to woo the consumer is apt to present considerable difficulties. The machines with which to make the consumer goods are not there. Hence the new Russian shopping list. It is now filled with such items as textile and boot-and-shoe machinery, tyre-making machinery and the like.

British industry has already notched some impressive victories in the battle for Russia's market. There is, for example, an oddly-named syndicate, Rustyfa, which is putting up a £12,000,000 motor-car tyre factory in the Ukraine. It includes such well-known names as Crompton Parkinson, and Mather & Platt, and a good deal of the know-how is being provided by a company in the Dunlop group.

There is also the recent victory of

Vickers Armstrong (Engineers) in snatching a substantial contract for the building of a chemical plant from the German jaws of Krupps. Another chemical plant is being put up in Russia by the Kestner Evaporator and Engineering Co. Finally, there is the achievement of the Dowsett Group of companies in securing contracts for the building of concrete plants in Soviet Russia.

To pay for all this will call for rather more than a bit of additional caviar. Credit will have to be given and the Government's Export Credits Guarantee Department will have to step into the breach and may have to lengthen its normal credit terms beyond the five-year limit which it has until now placed upon itself. It may also have some difficulty in convincing the Russians that Dr. Dalton's 2½ per cent is not the rate at which Britain can now lend even to such important customers as the Russian trading organizations.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Vin Extraordinaire

HOME-MADE wine can be made from almost anything, but robust brews like bog myrtle beer, scurvy-grass wine, and elderberry negus test the skill of the enthusiast. The old-fashioned recipes are on the scale Mrs. Beeton favoured. Seven gallons of water, six pounds of honey, twelve of sugar and the juice of twenty-four pounds of blackberries are just a beginning, to which a pint of lemon juice and other flavouring will be added.

Some home-made wines are more nauseating than others. Mock port, made from beetroot, is supposed to deceive experts. Some claim that a very interesting wine can be made from old corks, but the bouquet of the original wine is lost in the process. Sycamore wine is a rare vintage, and anyone who has tried to get hold of two gallons of sycamore sap will know why.

Wine-makers are either scientific or "slosh." Those scientifically inclined use fermentation locks, graduated measures, hydrometer, corking machine

and other gadgets. Slosh operators do very well with an old-fashioned bedroom jug, a piece of blanket, and corks bashed in with a coal-hammer. Most people do not take sufficient pains to "clarify" their wines. This does not worry them in the least and they watch with eager expectation as the guest sips a turbid, fizzy brew that tastes disagreeably of yeast. "It's tea wine," they say reverently. "You'd never realize it, would you!" And you wouldn't. Beginners do well with the popular "ginger-beer plant." The process is simple, but easily gets out of hand. If the timing slips the whole family will be drinking ginger-beer at breakfast because the bottles are needed for the next brew.

Home-made wines are stronger than the bought stuff, and as they cost about 4s. a gallon to make there is a tendency to quaff them pretty freely. Reactions vary unpredictably. Sometimes home-made wine will make a party go with a zest that is quite alarming. At other times the effects are soporific.

The tasting session of a home-made wine "circle" is a good opportunity for sampling a dozen or so varieties. Cherry bounce, marrow rum and treacle ale are worth trying. Metheglin is for the expert and takes seven years to mature. One doesn't spit out samples like professional wine tasters, and so recollection of the different wines, and indeed of the whole occasion, gets a bit hazy.

— RUPERT TOWNSEND-ROSE

Toby Competitions

No. 65—A Grown-up's Garden of Verses

SEEDSMEN, though sticking to prose, become almost lyrical in their catalogues at the qualities of the flowers promised. Give an extract from a literally lyrical seed catalogue, either one verse or several short verses about one or several flowers. Limit fourteen lines.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, May 1, to **TOBY COMPETITION No. 65, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.**

Report on Competition No. 62

(Challenge to Chancellor)

Competitors were asked to submit new ways of raising revenue. Many people suggested a tax on their particular aversion. Noise seemed to head the list of antipathies, followed by strikes, flag days, women in jeans or slacks, people who write to the newspapers (except *The Times*) and various forms of keeping up with the Joneses. The prize is awarded to:

B. D. SYLVESTER,
TURRET HOUSE,
PARK STREET,
WINDSOR,
BERKS.

for the following entry:

BUDGET PROPOSALS:

1. It is proposed to raise a tax on all stories and features in newspapers and periodicals, or on radio and television, which concern the private actions of private individuals. The tax is to be assessed on a sliding scale depending on the degree of intrusion and invasion of privacy involved in obtaining and publishing the story. The tax will be levied on the proprietors of the companies concerned.
2. It is also proposed to raise a tax on public opinion polls. This will be levied in proportion to the number of people questioned and the number of questions asked.
3. A small licencing fee is to be introduced for persons selling flags on flag days.

The following qualify for book tokens:

Banknotes and coins are issued on New Year's Day with the year of issue clearly shown. Each year that passes halves their face value. All bank balances, bills of exchange and so forth are subject to a similar statutory depreciation of 50 per cent per annum.

The only security exempt from depreciation is a special Government issue which can be bought at par on New Year's Day, and throughout the year on a sliding scale rising to £200 per cent on December 31.

These securities are, however, subject to a deduction of one pound in every ten (or less, or more, according to the revenue needed) which is carried out by Ernie in reverse which selects the unlucky numbers at random throughout the year.—*D. M. Ramsay, The Woodlands, Navenby, Lincoln*

LICENSE FOR LIBERTY

Last revenue might be recovered by licensing certain activities as follows:

Annual Cost of Licence	Licencee may
£1,000	Post one approved advertisement on one country road.
£500	Light garden bonfires with paraffin.
£100	Serve teas in dark rooms festooned with horse brasses.
£50	Boil greens on warm Sundays.
	Use a mower between one and three o'clock on Sunday afternoons.
£25	Sell coloured trousers to fat women.
	Sell raffle tickets between rubbers of Bridge.
£10	Use candles to light the dinner table.
	Chatter incessantly to silent budgie.
	Write to papers about first cuckoo.
	Use slippery antimaccassars on sofa.
£5	Talk on the eight-thirty.
	Make children recite to visitors.
	Cuss cold meat on washing-day.

—*J. H. Polfrey, Fircraft, Broadwater Rise, Guildford*

MERCENARY HONOURS LIST

Titles to suit all pockets, that's the idea: dub up and become a Dough-Knight, an Oof-Baronet, a Rhino-Baron, a Lolly-Viscount, a Brass-Earl, a Penny-Marquess or a Lucre-Duke. Ecclesiastical bias?—a Copper-Bishop then! Money Orders of every denomination issued. How about putting O.B.E. after your name, Order of the Bob Empire? For twelve Friday pay-packets you can be a Knight of the Weekly Bath. No cash? Perhaps you own something, a car, a cow, a wife, football boots . . . no reasonable offer refused if you opt to become a Knight of the Barter. And free to sit, mind you, in our new Chamber, the House of Dibs!—*R. A. McKenzie, 27 Howard Road, Woodside, London, S.E. 25*

SOUND A NEW TAX NOTE

Noise meters to be installed in every home and built into every portable gramophone and radio; tax to be levied on minimum allowable noise and above it, *pro rata* concessions for families with young children.

Loud clothes to be taxed in accordance with schedule drawn up by Savile Row and the British Colour Council.

Railway stations and compartments and other public places, to be equipped with individual volume recorders, with radar installation to detect those with megaphone-sized voices and persistent sniffs.—*Dismore, The Bourne, Connaught Road, Camberley, Surrey*

Bentley's Gallery



Diana Dors

*Diana Dors
Wins universal applause,
Though received somewhat coolly
By yours truly.*

Imparo L'Italiano

BY most Januaries my plans are made to go to Italy. When I say my plans are made I mean that Italy is my heart's delight and I am always planning to go there.

Had I a fortune I would fly to Rome or Florence or Naples or Reggio once a fortnight to get my hair cut; I would hire me a sturdy ship and have it loaded to the bridge with beautiful, softly-coloured tiles from Vietri for my floors; I would refresh my very soul with wines from the hill towns of Umbria and Tuscany and I would gorge myself on *prosciutto* and *melone*. But I hardly have the fare to Richmond, so I stay at home, eat eggs and bread, and PLAN.

Meanwhile, I learn the lovely, liquid language with a passion dormant since my school days, when, in a futile effort to placate the English mistress, I learnt by heart all the poems from the *Golden Treasury* and a good half of *Sesame and Lilies*. That I understood next to

FOR
WOMEN



nothing of any of it, sheds all the more credit on my feats of memory. I can never think of Keats' "Ode to a Grecian Urn" without remembering that for years I thought "brede of marble men and maidens overwrought" implied that everybody was het up.

In the early days of my striving for fluency in Italian, Lucia, an accommodating lass from Venezia, spent every Wednesday evening with me, but we sang rude songs and laughed too much, and though my vocabulary grew I could not string it together nor use it in public, so I took the plunge and joined the INSTITUTE.

It is a fearsome word but said with a certain inflection has a cultural flavour that pleases; it is housed, too, in a smart West End mansion where men who look like Beniamino Gigli and Dirk Bogarde pop secretly in and out of softly closing doors. But even that and the good canteen coffee did nothing to help me over the first few terrifying hours.

Cowering at the back of the class I thought I was pretty well invisible, but our smiling Signora smelled me out every time.

"Lei! Coniughino . . . !"

"Lei! Completino con l'articolo indefinito . . . !"

"Lei! Traducano in italiano . . . !"

Sick of shouting the wrong things from the depths of the classroom, the next week I moved myself to the front row right under the Signora's fine Italian nose. She still picked on me, but the difference was that now I did not have to shout back at her, nor did the others have to twist in their seats to stare at me.

We took part in short, guileless, Italian plays all about hotel keepers and their moronic guests who packed and unpacked with dreadful monotony, asked ceaselessly for their letters and lost their gloves and blamed the staff. We read aloud in our cute North London and Kensington accents, mutilating sound and meaning alike, but we made progress of a kind.

Painfully I am forcing my way out of the present tense and into the past and the future. I have acquired a fine collection of phrases such as "Your lawn is greener than mine," "Come upstairs and look at my new furniture," and "You are not obliged to be a druggist because your father has a drugstore."

I recite irregular verbs in my sleep

The Return

LIFE has no sweeter gift than going home—
Old Rover's moist embraces, one's delight
In tulips that have elbowed through one's loam
Or salad dressing with the sugar right.

What rapture, from one's undisputed chair,
To butter toast of the essential shade!
Great Scott! The very carpet seems to care!
Though had you noticed it was quite so frayed?

Had you all realized that the kitchen floor
Harboured crevasses and was most unsightly?
And is it my imagination or
Wouldn't you say the hall had shrivelled slightly?

Had you observed the bath was quite so battered?
Were you aware the lawn was so uneven?
Isn't our child astonishingly tattered?
Why don't we have a house like Joan and Stephen?

Well was it said that those returned from straying
Find a new magic in their native shelves,
Though less so, one might add, when they've been staying
With people a bit richer than themselves.

— DANIEL PETTIWARD

and the dust thickens in my room as I chew my lips over my homework. No matter. I know the past tense of *essere* when I see it.

"You should get yourself an Italian friend," says Lucia with a lewd wink.

So I will, but first I must learn a few opening remarks. I can hardly entice him with "I did not know this was a one-way street," or "What time does the train go to Pisa?"

All I want is time. To-day I hung a picture of the Scilla rocks above my writing desk and another of the Piazza di Spagna by the bookshelves, humming *La Campana di San Giusto* the while. To-night I shall eat spaghetti Bolognese. I can catch it now without a knife and fork in each hand and a pair of scissors, and only half of it slithers up my coat sleeve.

To-morrow I shall learn the future of the verb "to go" . . .

—DIANA PETRY

"My Dear, it's me . . .

MY dear, you know that heavenly astringent lotion? The one in the pink-and-gold bottle you gave me for Easter? Do I put it on before I try skin tonic or a *souffon* of that divine complexion cream? Or should I take off an hour or two and decide if I'm greasy, dry or average, and then simply cover myself with wrinkle-remover? You see, I can't apply that new all-purpose foundation until I've given myself the basic treatment; and until I've applied foundation I couldn't dream of using that Hawaii Tan face-powder, or that seductive mascara, or those eyelashes in the boxes, or Skin Fragrance (which is utterly different from scent), or that quite indelible irresistible lipstick. My dear, I'm absolutely, completely helpless: I'm just prone on the floor with my legs up against the wall to relax my tummy muscles, and little pads of wet cotton-wool on my eyes. I'm miserable. Sometimes I'm even tempted to go and wash my face with soap and water, but then I know I'd be utterly ruined for life. So you see I had to ring you about the astringent lotion. Perhaps you'd tell me what you always do. And then I can just put some face on and relax.

—JOANNA RICHARDSON

The Unfunctional Cluttered Line

THE trend—they tell me—is away from the clinical kitchenette back to the big, jolly farmhouse affair. Those of you who can't swing a cat without bruising it badly against steel sink, spin dryer, or infra-red oven with gliding glass door are yearning, it seems, for space—for the sort of floor area which can only be controlled by a perspiring pensioner in wellington boots and a tidal wave of detergent. It's the way of life which goes with all that elbow room which may surprise you.

Take for instance my wide, wide window sill; there's room on it (just) for two goldfish in an accumulator jar, a box of geranium cuttings, a medicine bottle motif (one containing an acorn), a carrot top giving birth on blotting paper and a flannel full of mustard and cress.

As for the colossal kitchen table with its scrubbed cook's dream of a surface, the family action-painters, model-aeroplane makers and miniature-railway

enthusiasts are prepared at a pinch to abandon the outer six inches. They need a handrail after all, those of them learning to roller-skate round the great big wooden floor.

The rest of the floor is for those who had hula-hoops given to them (and don't care if it isn't chic any more), two dogs, one cat, three sleeping baskets, a rubber bone, and me. I used to cook on a shelf someone knocked up for me next to the dresser until that became the territory of the home-made ginger-beer makers. Now I balance a bowl on the ironing board and wash up when there are fewer than six of them doing something else at the sink.

I have a great big refrigerator full of home-made lollies; a great big airing cupboard incubating birds' eggs; a great big pantry full of wet wellington boots; and a great big urge to be anywhere else. In one of those strictly functional, unfriendly boxes you're all so fed up with, for instance.

—JOAN RICE



"Would it be all right to dilute it with water to begin with?"



BOOKING OFFICE

The Fournier Story

The Lost Domain. Alain-Fournier. Tr. by Frank Davison. O.U.P., 7/-

THE Oxford University Press are to be congratulated on their imaginative addition to the World's Classics, a perfect translation from Frank Davison of Alain-Fournier's minor masterpiece, *Le Grand Meaulnes*, originally published in 1913, now available for the first time in English as *The Lost Domain*.

Apart from some short stories and essays, *The Lost Domain* is the only novel Fournier wrote. At the time of his death in action in 1914 he was in fact working on a second novel and thinking about a play, but this is, in a sense, irrelevant, because *The Lost Domain* is something more than an exceptionally promising first novel, it is the whole of a young man's life and cannot be detached from Fournier's personal experience.

The story as such is basically simple. The narrator, who assumes a master-of-ceremony role, is François, the son of a country schoolmaster. He it is who supplies the realism through establishing the isolation of the background scene, the simplicity of the school life, the uncouthness of the village youths, a deliberate picture of social bleakness which serves to heighten the colourfulness of the hero, le Grand Meaulnes, whose entry into this small world, like the passing-through of travelling comedians, heralds adventure.

So powerful is Meaulnes's first impact that one is in no way reluctant to accept the strange *Commedia dell'Arte* flavoured episodes which relate to his meeting with Yvonne de Galais in the enchanted, uncharted estate, and to his involvement with her rakish brother Franz. Thereafter the narrator, as well as Meaulnes, is committed to the pursuit of ideal love.

Symbolically Fournier uses Meaulnes's envious schoolmates (envious because they smell in him the adventure of obsessive love), the difficulties of returning to the Lost Domain and the disasters which Meaulnes's sworn brotherhood to Franz provokes, to represent the obstacles which the world outside puts in the way of ideal love. And although Meaulnes wins his Yvonne in the end, fate intervenes yet again to divide them, because the world outside is shown as an avenging fury intent on extracting full payment from those who dare to love until death.

Fournier, christened Henri Alban, was himself the son of a country schoolmaster, and knew nothing of the world outside the background to his novel until he was sent to a Paris Lycée in his late teens. It was in Paris that Fournier met and fell in love with the original Yvonne who, so unwittingly, was to influence and shape his whole life. Facts and fiction unite. He saw the girl,

accompanied by an older woman, on June 1, 1905, on the steps of the Salon de la Nationale. He followed them, as Meaulnes does in the book, boarded the Seine passenger-steamer and silently escorted them to their house in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. The next day Fournier was waiting when the girl appeared destined for church. His approach to her and the words he used are identical with those used by Meaulnes. She rebuffed him with courtesy, and he watched her go out of his life, describing the incident in almost the same words as used in *The Lost Domain*.

Up to this stage *The Lost Domain* is more or less straight autobiography. Then fiction, wish-fulfilment, takes over. What is so interesting is how Fournier used his own experience of his search for the original Yvonne in relation to Meaulnes's search. After years of dedicated frustrated love Fournier at last tracked down his Yvonne to find that she was then married, the mother of two small children. He paid her a visit, they agreed to write. Fournier went away, never to see her again: he began his novel and also embarked on a substitute love-affair.

When Meaulnes hears (falsely as it happens) that Yvonne is married, he too goes off to another passion with a girl who turns out to be Franz's lost fiancée. In fiction Fournier gives his hero marriage with Yvonne, although the result of his own loss compelled him to serve truth by taking Meaulnes away from the delight of Yvonne immediately after the wedding. Even subconsciously Fournier could not accept the fictitious happiness, and although the novel's dénouement is at times almost boyishly naïve in its melodrama, it becomes reasonable when viewed through the experience of eleven years of a young man's unrequited love. It is this youthful and tragic reality which makes *The Lost Domain* so true a story.—KAY DICK

POETS' CORNER



7. HUGH MACDIARMID

BLOOD COUNT

Venetian Blind. William Haggard. Cassell, 10/6. Thriller, only mildly thrilling, but quite enjoyable. Almost everybody has a motive for doing in engineering tycoon who is working on negative gravity. Dinky accountant, exquisite stepdaughter, realistically wet hero, international spy ring, all close in for the kill in Venice. Characters and secret-service work plausible and amusing, but culture sloshed on in buckets.

The Sapphire Conference. Peter Graaf. Michael Joseph, 13/6. Unpleasant scientist's head found battered but grinning on top of cupboard in Oxbridge laboratory. That amiable American private eye, Dust, lounges about in amused astonishment at our Englishry. Academic life nicely taken off, but when it comes to detection there are too many red-herrings and not enough copper-bottomed suspects.

Blood Will Tell. Jean Potts. Gollancz, 12/6. New Yorker returns to small town in the hot weather and finds his favourite uncle has tried to kill himself, apparently. Murky genius centre round mysterious thug and nasty little girl who becomes nice a bit too quickly. Aunts and atmosphere done to a turn, but dénouement a bit shambling.

Death Walks by the River. Vicars Bell, Faber, 13/6. Ex-Soho type, retired to village, is found murdered in hiker's tent. Village life well but whimsically done, but chief suspect enters inartistically late and Dr. Baynes, the cop-helping beetle-fancier, twice happens to find himself in pubs where vital witnesses work.

The Day They Robbed the Bank of England. John Brophy. Chatto and Windus, 15/-. Period piece, and not too obviously fake. Young American adventurer happens to find access to disused sewer running under Bank of England, circa 1900. Careful plans upset by jealous mistress. Not very exciting but simple and leisurely. Ideal for anyone who wants a change of pace.

Seven Chose Murder. Roy Vickers. Faber, 15/-. Excellent short stories, varying between the mechanically ingenious and the psychologically fascinating. All precise and honest.

Other New Books

Master of Lancut. Count Alfred Potocki. W. H. Allen, 25/-.

The fabulous Lancut, after surviving the agonizing advances and retreats of two world wars, is now a State Museum in Communist-dominated Poland, and its last owner describes how this arose with a courage and dignity that is peculiarly Polish. Count Potocki devoted the years between two wars to improvements on his estates, and through his international relationships he also furthered the cause of his newly-liberated country. Few hosts can have entertained more lavishly, and consequently his memoirs are over-balanced

with names; but disarmingly he admits that boredom only set in when he found himself a middle-aged exile whose devoted friends were only too eager to keep him on a social treadmill. The many photographs range from the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in shooting clothes to the Aga Khan in sun-spectacles. The author was probably at his happiest on safari, hunting or playing polo, but he was also a keen ballroom dancer, a taste he shared with his formidable mother, who herself took lessons in the Charleston at an advanced age. Crossing the Atlantic shortly after the Abdication he made a private vow to avoid all discussion of this painful subject, and the force of his personality was such that he was even able to impose this ban on Lord Beaverbrook.

— V. G. P.

Our Friend James Joyce. Mary and Padraic Colum. Gollancz, 16/-.

These lighthearted, sometimes sub-acid chapters of reminiscence by Dubliners who knew Joyce both as a fierce young student and a world celebrity are a bit more than just additions to the mound of raw material that exegesis of his work needs. The scenes are carefully composed and the writers have a proper insistence on their own independent dignity.

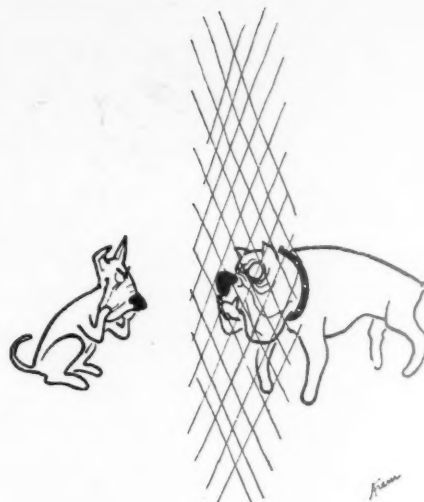
To those who did not know him Joyce seems an even less amiable acquaintance than Lawrence. The Colums are completely inside his world, more completely than Stanislaus Joyce was in *My Brother's Keeper*, and they do not, unless I am very imperceptive, realize quite how far they were his victims. However, it is the work that matters, and while they add little to the discussion of the value of his aims, they throw quite a lot of light on what he actually did, and in the course of doing so they have produced a little masterpiece of reminiscent writing.

— R. G. G. P.

Criminals Confess. Belton Cobb. Faber, 16/-.

Except for ghouls, most of this book seems a pointless exhumation of horror. Mr. Cobb suggests there is much to learn from the last-moment confessions he has unearthed of a number of criminals from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but it is hard to see how forensic psychiatry is enriched by Alexander Pierce's report of prisoners escaped from Botany Bay eating one another in the wilds, or by the details of how John William Holloway strangled his wife and cut her body into little bits.

Many of the confessions are written in the style of an old actor recalling his finest performances. The only dimly attractive character here is a lunatic called James Aitken who set out to blow up all our dockyards for the sake of immortality. Seduction, thieving, cheating, lying, brutality—we get the lot, but why? Unfortunately Mr. Cobb's approach is coloured more by romance



than science, and his commentary full of novelettish conjectures.

— E. O. D. K.

All in a Lifetime. Walter Allen. Michael Joseph, 15/-.

Mr. Allen's new novel, his first for nine years, shows impressive development. *All in a Lifetime* tells of Bill Ashted, a skilled working man who has lived to see new power vested in his class. An intelligent boy, he was taken from school to learn a trade just when the delights of learning were being revealed to him. He felt no bitterness, but the seeds of revolt were set. Looking back over the years in which he has known real poverty, travelled as an immigrant to New York, was fostered into radicalism by a brilliant friend, Billy realizes that his life has not lacked significance. He has done his part during the exciting period of working-class awakening. Flawless in style, this story is told with compassion, humour and a consciousness of the wonder that can illumine the humblest of lives.

— O. M.

CREDIT BALANCE

What's Happening in China. Lord Boyd Orr and Peter Townsend. Macdonald, 15/-. Entertaining and informative first look at the People's Republic. What's happening is regarded sympathetically, but no punches are pulled. Illustrated and very useful.

The Sixth Sense. Rosalind Heywood. Chatto and Windus, 21/-. Comprehensive, unbiased account of the research done into extra-sensory perception; especially useful in putting the proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research into their proper scientific context. Inescapable reaction after reading: ESP exists in sufficient degree to warrant another look at materialistic concepts of the universe.

Not in the Limelight. Sir Ronald Wingate. Hutchinson, 25/-. Obsessively modest reminiscences from final generation of Empire-builders. Mesopotamia, Persian Gulf, Indian States, wartime Whitehall, Dakar, Seac, Reparations. Amiable domestic simplicities; important historical oddments; self-revelation of qualities and limitations, itself a contribution to history.

AT THE THEATRE IN PARIS—2

L'Hurluberlu (COMÉDIE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES)—*Tueur sans Gages* (RECAMIER)—*La Fête du Cordonnier* (THÉÂTRE NATIONAL POPULAIRE)—*Tchin-Tchin* (POCHE MONTPARNASSE)

ANOUILH seems to have shed his bitterness in *Pauvre Bitos*, and returned to a kinder view of the poor old human race. I don't think *L'Hurluberlu* is quite so witty as *Waltz of the Toreadors*, but is in the same genre and about another general. Young, retired for conspiring against the régime, he settles in his country house to write his memoirs, and discovers he has nothing to say. He has bees in his bonnet and is madly out-of-date; he forms a committee of locals to improve the world, and they all melt away, all but the loyal, heel-clicking ironmonger. His wife tires of his benevolent despotism; when his daughter is seduced by a smart cad from Paris and the general sends for him, he is met with cynical effrontery and talked to as a child. Slowly he learns that life is not so simple as he thought, and he grows humbler.

The play has no axe to grind. It is primarily a study of character, and each fresh blow to his pride makes us like the general more. Theatrically it is arranged with great skill, and it has some rich comic scenes, the best a committee-meeting for a charity play in the village, the priest urging a safe old favourite and the superior young man taking command

in favour of a monosyllabic piece from the *avant-avant-garde*. Anouilh enjoys himself poking fun at Beckett and Ionesco.

The success of the general as a character owes much to Paul Meurisse, an actor of the right stature to suggest a narrow-minded soldier nice enough to be pathetic. Jean Claudio plays the unruffleable boulder with aplomb, and there are amusing sketches of the wise old priest, by Camille Guérini, and of the faithful ironmonger, by Marcel Peres. A polished production by Roland Pietri, who takes the doctor, and striking sets by Jean-Denis Malclès.

Ionesco's first full-length play, *Tueur sans Gages*, is a satire on man's powerlessness to deal with evil, in spite of—or because of—his technical achievements. His mass complacency is seen through the extra dimension of a nightmare, and one is often reminded of Kafka.

His hero is a sensible young man who visits a new city, where everything is done for its inhabitants except action to arrest an assassin who murders daily. This is calmly accepted, and the visitor is horrified. The second part is full of Ionesco larks, fairly entertaining but with little bearing on the play, which I feel would have gone better in one long act; but the final scene is hauntingly powerful. In it the hero walks and walks, towards us, with an endless vista of houses behind him (Jacques Noël's sets add much to the double atmosphere). His cries for his friend echo terrifyingly. The light fades, and suddenly the murderer steps out, blankly brute-faced. Then in a tremendously dramatic monologue the hero reasons with him, desperately asking why? The only answer is a chilling laugh. The killer never speaks. The young man grows more and more hysterical, and as the curtain falls the killer is slowly moving towards him, with an open knife. The visitor is played extremely sympathetically by Claude Nicot, who pulls off his marathon speech faultlessly, and Jacques Saudray suggests something much bigger and more menacing than a single murderer. It is a play to make one think, and José Quaglio has produced it to that end.

[*Tueur sans Gages*

Béranger—CLAUDE NICOT Le Tueur—JACQUES SAUDRAY

[*La Fête du Cordonnier*

Simon Eyre—GEORGES WILSON

We went to the first night of *La Fête du Cordonnier* at the T.N.P. The huge stage of this theatre is clearly a handicap except for broadly scenic plays; speech and movement have to be slowed down. Georges Wilson's production, with a vast skeleton set, strikes the English eye as being curiously un-Elizabethan, but he brings out Dekker's simple humours and his own performance as Simon Eyre is first-rate. He is a gentle bear of a man, a natural comedian, and he dominates these revels delightfully.

I was glad to have seen *Tchin-Tchin*, an original little play by François Billel-doux, which takes the unusual line of following the flotsam of a divorce tangle. Both their mates have run away with one another, leaving them hurt and bitter. They begin very correctly. Gradually he teaches her to drink. Their resolution ebbs. They set up house together, but are too far gone to make love. So far the play is amusing and rather touching; it breaks down towards the end, but is written with understanding. The man is taken engagingly by the author, the woman by Katharina Renn, who lost my sympathy by being too exactly the French

idea of a cold Englishwoman. This was partly in the writing. The list of charitable organizations she was mixed up in was enough to drive anyone to the bottle.

— ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PLAY

Dark Halo (ARTS)

The Hidden River (CAMBRIDGE)

Mr. Fox of Venice (PICCADILLY)

BUT for its end, *Dark Halo*, by Sylvia Leigh, is a well-written and sympathetic study of one of the tiny sects of religious fanatics that blossom so easily in America. Mrs. Dennis—"Mother" to the little group of misfits clustering round her adoringly—is a bogus faith-healer, unaware that she is a fraud. She has sacrificed her marriage and is prepared for any sacrifice from others which will bring more glory to herself. She is greedy for power, yet played by Mary Ellis she has great charm and persuasion. The glib jargon of crank religion pours from her confidently. Her pathetic disciples contribute heavily towards a communal household in which they eagerly accept her discipline and her interference in their lives. She talks her most fanatical supporter into giving up his marriage for the cause, and an anxious young mother into sacking her doctor; it is a shockingly negative thought that her baby has pneumonia. While "Mother" and her "children" whip themselves into hysteria in a healing-jamboree the baby dies, and in the grim scene that follows the disciples find they have signed away their shares in the house. Even for these poor gulls this is too much, and they melt away. While "Mother" seemed unconscious of her fraud the play gripped. Miss Leigh presents her very fairly, so that at times we are almost sorry for her;

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but to find her actually dishonest lowers its whole tone and makes us feel cheated.

With that reservation it is strongly dramatic, and some of its scenes move us strangely. Miss Ellis, whom it is a great pleasure to see again, fills in the woman's personality in such rich detail that she lives completely; and, produced by Clifford Williams, there are some vivid character-studies, the best from Larry Cross, Sheila Burrell, Edgar Wreford and Susan Marryot.

I haven't read Storm Jameson's novel on which *The Hidden River* is based, but I imagine it must carry more conviction than the play. This has been adapted by Ruth and Augustus Goetz, the *Heiress* team, from whom one expects a high standard, and it is all the sadder that the values in a serious piece of work have somehow gone astray.

A family of Loire landowners is rent by the return of an uncle imprisoned as a collaborator; he is suspected of being responsible for the death of a nephew, caught helping the escape of British P.O.W.s, one of whom, a singularly tactless bore, has arrived at the chateau to make his own inquiries about the

boy's end. The old man explains that while he was guilty of hospitality to a civilized German general, an old friend, it was not he who gave his nephew away; and on his deathbed he suggests, incredibly for a man so wise and tolerant, that it was another nephew, the younger son of the house. When obliged to confess, this extraordinary youth declares he did it to save the family's way of life, and instead of clouting him or telephoning for the police his elder brother in disgust hands over his share in the estate and goes off into the night.

The gestures are a little too melodramatic for a straight play, the characters too dull and solemn, except for the uncle, of whom in his brief scene Alan MacNaughtan makes a very good thing. Leo Genn, Catherine Lacey, Ralph Michael and John Stratton are sound enough as the rest; but from the dress-circle, allowing for a ruthlessly bronchitic audience, I found some of them at times quite inaudible.

Mr. Fox of Venice, a farcical whodunit, is by Frederick Knott, who wrote *Dial "M" for Murder*; it is based on a novel which took its theme openly from

Ben Jonson's *Volpone*. I found the fun pretty thin, and the plot too baffling to be followed, but it has good moments.

Mr. Fox is a rich American eccentric living palatially in Venice, who engages an English adventurer as his secretary, and, giving out that he is dying, invites two old friends to his death-bed to tease them with his will—a pompous Englishman and a desiccated athlete from the

entertaining, and Jonson might have been borrowed from with more advantage.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Two Ibsens superbly done, *Ghosts* (Princes—19/11/58), and *Brand* (Lyric, Hammersmith—15/4/59). And *Five Finger Exercise* (Comedy—23/7/58), a clever drama by a new writer.

—ERIC KEOWN

REP SELECTION

Dundee Rep, *The Dock Brief* and *What Shall We Tell Caroline?* until May 2nd.

Castle, Farnham, *Twelfth Night*, until May 2nd.

Bromley Rep, *No Concern of Mine*, until April 25th.

Theatre Royal, Lincoln, *A Ticklish Business*, until April 25th.

States. Both are mad to get his cash. From being active enemies they are driven together by the arrival of a glamorous woman claiming to be Mr. Fox's "wife in common law," which it seems is a euphemism in America for an acknowledged mistress. She is then found dead in the lift, at which point I must loyally draw a veil over Mr. Knott's whodunit operations. These grow wilder and wilder. Mr. Fox is well taken by Paul Rogers, with a sharp edge of caprice. His teamwork with his secretary, played with an engaging lack of scruple by Jeremy Brett, is neat. There is a very funny scene of mutual distrust between the two male guests, Newton Blick and Carl Bernard, and a ripe Venetian police chief, by Harold Kasket. Marian Spencer is attractively the lady in the case. But on the whole the evening is only mildly

AT THE PICTURES

Like Father Like Son
Imitation of Life

THE one of this week's films that I found infinitely the most enjoyable—indeed the only one that I really enjoyed, and the one that I think most readers of this page would enjoy—is also the one that is being shown farthest from central London, the one that has had the least notice, and the one that is advertised in a way calculated to pack in all the people who won't realize how good it is and to scare away all those who would: *Padri e Figli*, or *Like Father Like Son* (Director: Mario Monicelli). I know the unfortunate and misleading way this is being publicized because at the press show they gave us the handout designed for the trade, for exhibitors, and we were able to see illustrations of the advertisement blocks available: single column and double column, each proclaiming "An Eyefull of Fun for Everyone!" and spattered with little stars (for gaiety), and with a drawing of a comic-strip situation that—like the English title, for that matter—is nowhere justified or represented in the film.

To be sure, it is a comedy; but it is a sensitive and charming one, full of

character, admirably played and directed, and without a touch of that wolf-whistle raucousness the publicity strives to suggest. It is built round the lives of five families, and the main linking situation is perhaps the love affair between Marcella, the daughter of a tailor (Vittorio de Sica), and Sandro, the son of an irritable medical Professor (Ruggiero Marchi). The youngsters are students at the same school and play truant together; as their story develops, so do the stories of nine or ten other people. The district nurse, her husband the zoo attendant, their four small boys, her sister, wife of an airport worker, the young couple who live above the doctor—all these and more have become one's familiar friends before the picture is over.

It is dominated by Vittorio de Sica as the genial, easy-going father of Marcella—even though he has no part in some of the other stories. They could all in fact be summarized separately, but that would give a quite wrong impression of disjointed episodes: the piece comes over as a whole, and very attractively, because the atmosphere is right. It is full of amusing and beautifully observed moments, and the narrative style is satisfyingly quick, with no effects rubbed in. There are shortcomings in the photography, and in the printing of the titles (speeches are sometimes telegraphed before we hear and see them made, for one thing); but the film is pleasing enough to make such details unimportant.

I'm temperamentally unfitted to appreciate *Imitation of Life* (Director: Douglas Sirk), but I know tremendous numbers of people who lap it up, for it has been scientifically contrived (from Fannie Hurst's novel) with just that end in view. The central figure is what the synopsis calls an "attractive widow" (Lana Turner), and that in itself automatically endears her to a vast proportion of the film audience. Then, adding wish-fulfilment to opportunity for self-identification, she delights every near-middle-aged lady in the cinema by progressing to a successful and lavishly rewarded career on the stage—not, it is true, without one or two periods of laughable difficulty, but always with unruffled attractiveness. All this time she has living with her a devoted Negro woman (Juanita Moore) who—another bit of wish-fulfilment—is both confidante and immensely efficient unpaid housekeeper. Each has a daughter; the



Sarah Jane—SUSAN KOHNER

(*Imitation of Life*)

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

The "Punch in the Theatre" Exhibition is at the Repertory Theatre, Dundee, Dundee Art Gallery, and the Festival Theatre, Pitlochry.

The *Punch* cinema cartoon exhibition is at the Lewisham Gaumont, by arrangement with the Rank Organisation.

attractive widow's falls in love with her mother's suitor, and the Negro woman's tries to "pass" (as white). More than two hours of all this, with almost constant background music. No, it's not for me.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Life in Emergency Ward 10, from the TV show, is efficiently entertaining comedy-drama-pathos blended in the popularly acceptable proportions. Also in London: the Greek *A Matter of Dignity* (11/3/59), the funny Polish comedy *Eve Wants to Sleep* in the same programme as the pleasing Arabian fable *Goha* (both 15/4/59), probably *Room at the Top* (4/2/59) and Rod Steiger as *Al Capone* (8/4/59), and certainly *Gigi* (18/2/59).

Most impressive release is a colour documentary, *No Room for Wild Animals* ("Survey," 24/12/58). *The Journey* (1/4/59) is worth seeing because it is so well done. *The Thirty-nine Steps* (25/3/59) amounts to a still more facetious version of Hitchcock's 1935 film, with still less bearing on the Buchan original.

— RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE BALLET

Tamara Toumanova
(SADLER'S WELLS)

A SPECIALLY warm welcome awaited Tamara Toumanova on her re-appearance in London after a long absence. Her striking beauty on her first entrance to dance an *adagio* of her own devising held the eye magnetically. One watched with collaborative sympathy the strongly accented motions of the *pas de deux* in which Wladimir Oukhtomsky was her sturdily-built partner. Next came the *Grand Pas Espagnol* from *Don Quixote* to the music of Minkus, and later the Saint-Saens-Fokine *Dying Swan* which, since Pavlova first danced it, has never failed an accomplished soloist.

The evening continued, with interludes by a section of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Michael Collins, through its two-and-a-half hours of solo and *pas de deux*. Technical mastery displayed, and indeed exaggerated, without relation to any total artistic creation may excite admiration for a while but soon the monotony becomes increasingly difficult to support. Nevertheless Toumanova was given a gratifying ovation.

— C. B. MORTLOCK

ON THE AIR

Cops and Robbers

BERKELY MATHER'S "Charlesworth" appears to be one of the BBC's pet characters. True, they are not yet so proud of him as of Ted Willis's great big lovable blue serge auntie called P.C. Dixon, who always gives the impression that he would blush



Det.-Supt. Charlesworth—WENSLEY PITHEY
Jim—TERENCE ALEXANDER

[Charlesworth]
Charles Begbie—WILLIAM MERVYN
Gahla—LANA MORRIS

at a naughty joke and who is really too nice to have to associate with all those wicked folk in Dock Green: but Charlesworth is a comparative newcomer, and the Corporation has hardly had time to build him into an enduring mythological figure. I watched the second episode in Mr. Mather's new series, intending to make a good, long appraisal of Wensley Pithey's portrayal of the Detective-Superintendent. I was foiled. Despite star billing in *Radio Times*, Mr. Pithey made his first entrance exactly five minutes from the end of the half-hour show, and could very well have taken the week off for all Charlesworth added to the proceedings. This seems a strange way to try to turn a character into a household word. As to the episode itself, it was a routine tale about crooks, no better and no worse than a thousand that have kept the commuter awake when there was nothing else to read in the evening paper. We saw a group of obvious confidence tricksters performing a confidence trick upon a man from Sunderland. The victim then told Charlesworth, who thought for a moment in a sneery sort of way, guessed where the crooks would be, went there, and arrested them. Wry exit line from Charlesworth to his sergeant, run titles and signature tune, and finish. The only thing that intrigued me about the whole flat business was that the man from Sunderland spoke in a Yorkshire accent. I am still baffled, because this was the one point that was never explained.

I grant that Mr. Mather takes care to invest his characters with some of the attributes of human beings, and does not insult us with crude and vicious rubbish of the "Highway Patrol" order (when, incidentally, will Broderick Crawford either see a chiroprapist or admit that he takes a size larger in shoes?): but I feel he should deck out his tales of crime with more ingenuity of plot than was shown in this particular example. Either that, or go the whole hog and treat them in

documentary fashion. He has a wide enough knowledge of London's underworld.

Returning to an old complaint, I challenge ATV to set out in black-and-white just one reason why "Thirty-six Hours" (to take an example at random) should be included in a series entitled "Great Movies of Our Time." Failing that, may I have their assurance that they will eventually show "I was a Teenage Werewolf" under the same banner?

It is a pleasure to see again those swift and entertaining travelogues filmed by Cyril Moorhead and edited by Jack Gold for "To-night," now shown under the title "Whicker's World" (BBC). With penetrating photography and Whicker's breezy interviews and commentaries, these snapshots of a changing world form "To-night's" most notable achievement.

"Drumbeat" (BBC) is beginning to frighten me. It's not just the noise, or the monotonous way they keep on playing and snarling that same tune over and over again (isn't it time somebody wrote a second rock-'n'-roll number?)—it's the feeling that all these deliberately hideous-looking young people are gradually going out of their tiny minds. One of these nights they will all fall in a twitching heap, and the sodden reeds of the long ill-treated saxophones will grunt a grudging threnody, and the real Elvis Presley, far away, will smile a secret smile. When that night comes, with any luck I shall be looking in at Ottilie Patterson, who is proud to be a square, and who has more feeling for the beauty of jazz than any fifty rock-'n'-rollers tied together in a bundle. On the same bill with Alma Cogan in a recent "Saturday Spectacular" (ATV). (but in much smaller print) Miss Patterson sang pure jazz in a way that would have brought a nod from Bessie Smith herself. As for Miss Cogan, she was cute.

— HENRY TURTON

Motor If You Must

By J. B. BOOTHROYD



7 The Social Side

For those about to become knights of the road

THERE are people who profess themselves innocent of class feeling, and you may be one. If so, brace yourself for a new experience. From the moment when you first grip a steering-wheel of your own you will enter a sharply-defined two-class society: the motorists and the rest. On your first personal door-slam you will become aware not only of this but of the exhilarating upward transition that makes you one of the autocracy.* Now, you tell yourself, engaging low gear with a flourish and rolling forward over a pedestrian's dropped library book, you have arrived. But don't be too sure.

Over-simplification is the danger threatening you at this stage. Non-motorists can certainly be lumped together as a class, and may in fact be seen in this condition at any pedestrian crossing; but in the upper, or mobile, bracket the pattern is sprawling and intricate, a complex of precedence and protocol that makes the organizing of a state banquet a mere game of dominoes. Do you imagine that your 8 h.p. pre-war tourer will be recognized as a motor-car at all by the man in a forty-foot limousine filled with cigar-smoke? Then you are courting yet another icy douche of disenchantment. If he concedes the tiniest rich burp from his horn as he billows past, regard it as a triumph and note it in your Motoring Diary as soon as you get home. Oculists say that the limousine man literally *does not see* cars weighing under one and a half tons, and in the case of a short, squat, high-shouldered model with an exposed spare wheel will often try to park on the space it is already occupying.

Garage-attendants bring this gulf home admirably. If you and the limousine-man drive up simultaneously, he

for twenty gallons, you for the periodic gust of wind in your flabby nearside-rear, the mechanic may simply kick your front wheels before they've stopped turning, thus getting you out on to the road again before you can give the place a bad name. If you are stubborn, and keep coming back, he may see that to serve you is the only solution; but he will offer no conversation, and pocket your shilling without even spitting on it; if he is of a sardonic turn he may look your car over thoughtfully and hand the shilling back. For the limousine-man he hurriedly changes into freshly-laundered overalls; there are salutes, lowly forms of speech, sycophantic attitudes; he handles all metal work with a new yellow duster, and at the last moment drops to his knees to prize a flint from a back tyre, and is reversed over. Even then he struggles up with a smile and executes a last cringing ritual of traffic control before collapsing.

I have taken extreme examples.

Within the extremes are numberless subtle gradations which, like Italian grammar, can only be mastered by long and tedious application. New puzzles are for ever presenting themselves. Cars can be classified by age, make, size, country of origin, number of doors and internal fur-coats, quality of carpets, quantity of blue smoke, incidence of exhaust-pipes and upwards of two hundred other factors. The difficulty is to place the car of irreproachable breeding but advanced age in relation to the brand-new mass-producee of equal current value. You will find, nevertheless, that an instinct gradually develops.

Expressions on the face—and indeed the lips—of other motorists are a help. Again, policemen will address you as "Sir," or not. Children at the roadside will stand back respectfully or put their tongues out. Workmen holding up traffic while a mate backs a lorry into the highway will either wave you on first or they won't. In time you will know your place in the class structure. The easy motoring conversation in the morning train, which for long, non-motoring years you had anticipated with a wild joy, will not be for you after all once the man in the corner (automatic gear-change and built-in cocktail cabinet) has trapped you into confessing a second-hand three-wheeler. You will learn—and this fairly soon—to give up tooting outside the grocer's in the confidence that a smiling counter-hand will come staggering out with your telephoned order; he restricts this service to cars whose purchase tax alone would buy eight of yours. With your



*System of government by autos (U.S.)



"She's kept her promise—here's the get-away car."

sort of car you go in and get it, and pay cash, thank you very much.

Once you know where you stand the important thing is to accept it and arrange your social life accordingly. If you are bidden to dine with the known owner of a Humperdinck Pacemaster you have only one course open—to decline. Explain in your letter that you at present have a twenty-five-year-old car with all seats oozing stuffing and he will understand perfectly. If you hope to be getting a better one in a couple of years' time there is no harm in mentioning this, and he will make a note to repeat the invitation when it will be less of an embarrassment to you both. Avoid at all costs any attempt at deception. To leave your car half a mile from the house and walk up the drive may get you through the dinner all right, especially if you have mugged up on the Humperdinck Pacemaster; but afterwards, when your host comes to see you off and asks in some surprise where your car is, you are, quite frankly,

doomed. To pretend that you came by bus is unthinkable; after he has recovered he will only insist on running you home, a chilling experience during which no word is exchanged. What is more, you *will* have to come by bus next morning to get your car back . . . and while you are battling with the starting handle your host may well emerge from the drive, taking the dogs out. What happens then depends largely on his delicacy of feeling; this faculty is usually seriously atrophied in Humperdinck owners, but there is at least a chance that he may give the car an appraising glance and automatically ignore the pair of you.

It is only fair to say that in the sphere of village community life the subdivisions of the upper, or motoring, class are fewer. Under the pressure of cricket club or dramatic society recruiting, in fact, they come near to disappearing altogether. For those who deplore the two-class system it sometimes seems that cricket might achieve

its highly desirable downfall if only a few enlightened Secretaries would give a lead. What is needed, early in the now imminent season, is a fixture between the first and second teams. Then perhaps the 1st XI, beaten by seven wickets and buying pints all round for the flushed, victorious 2nd, would at last realize that eleven motor-cars don't make a side, particularly when one of them is yours, and you last handled a bat in 1926 when half your House Eleven were down with measles. The truth is that though village selectors have closed their eyes to it for forty years, the 2nd XI are the real playing members; the fact that they travel to their away matches in an old, despicably small bus has no effect whatsoever on their performance with bat and ball. Incredible? It seems so, of course; but let it be put to the test this year. It could mean a blessed release for many a non-cricketer such as you, who is no sooner reported to have arrived at his newly-acquired country cottage by car



than the President and 1st XI Captain are kneeling on the doorstep begging him to go in second wicket down at Slaugham-by-Molesfield next Saturday.¹

In dramatic society circles the emphasis tends to be the other way. At the moment there are more amateur actors coming off the production line than there are motor-cars (or, some say, cricketers); in Sussex, for instance, it is often necessary to have four or five separate Agatha Christies in the same week, and even then competition for parts remains keen. Without a car it's hopeless. A small one, capable of taking the producer home to an outlying farmstead twice weekly throughout the winter months, will admit you to the lower echelons, qualifying you to hand screw-drivers during the dress rehearsal, or lend bird-song records. For even a walk-on part you need a car big enough to get a settee in the back, or equivalent bulk of step-ladders, paint-pots and amplifying equipment. And star roles go only to owners of station-wagons and trailers, who don't mind having the

scenery for Act One of "The Importance" inside, a papier mâché oak-tree lashed on top, and their own drawing-room carpet screwed up in the trailer with a mahogany overmantel and forty square feet of trellis. The local newspaper reporter, turned dramatic critic, frequently tends to be curt about "unsuitable casting," which hurts no feelings, invites no horse-whippings, and loses no subscribers. He might like to make a note of the foregoing, and in future take unsuitable casting for granted: it is only in their later and tubbier years that amateur actors can afford the sort of motor-car that finally lands them the juvenile lead.

As good a guide as any to the social stature of any particular car is the ceremony of farewell on any Parents Day. The school's lichened forecourt is a great *concours d'élégance*, line upon line of glittering monsters all looking much of a muchness to you, perhaps; but note the intricate pattern of the Headmaster's progress as he shakes hands through one window, goes eight cars down the line for a shake through

another, comes back three, dodges through the ranks to wave to a 40 h.p. parent on the verge of leaving under insult—tricky, that one, same make, same year, same number of demisters as the Forster-Brangroves', but only six headlights instead of eight, aha! . . . Yes, the Head is the man who knows; and if, to your surprise, he leaves until the last a great, black, chauffeur-driven beauty of the kind seen gliding in and out of Downing Street, he still knows; Frampton minor was foolish enough to blab it around that his people were hiring for the occasion. Hiring, I need hardly say, whether by the hour, day or year, doesn't count as being a motorist at all. Yet there are degrees, even in that. To hire because you have no motor-car is damaging but not damning. To hire because you have one and daren't be seen in it is social death. No schoolboy worth his salt would ever urge his people to hire. He simply adds to his letter of invitation, in block capitals and underlined in two colours, "DON'T DRIVE UP."

Next Week : Care and Maintenance

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